Government and Politics in Orissa

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Editors

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PREFACE

State politics is the meeting point of local and national politics. It is also partly a transmission belt. New Delhi reaches villages and towns through state headquarters. Similarly, local politics reaches New Delhi through the same route, though it moves in the reverse direction. What happens in Bhubaneswar or Bhopal combines some elements of the process and content of national politics, and some elements of that of local politics.

In relation to the Centre and local units, the state is not just a mailing office. It is something more than that. The state, to some extent, controls the content and speed of flow of communication from the centre to villages and towns. What is to be stopped at its level and what is to be allowed to pass through it and reach the people in different localities is determined by the equation between the centre and the concerned state goverment. Similarly, the relation between a state government and local power structures would significantly influence the efforts of the latter to reach the centre. Thus in Indian politics states occupy a key position. Being the "points of confluence" of several streams flowing from different directions—vertical as well as horizontal—they exhibit the politics of India in a macro-micro continuum. It is, therefore, felt that the study of state politics would make some important contribution to our understanding of Indian politics at different levels, from village to the centre, mediated through the state.

India is a "union of states", and these constituent units display a large degree of similarities. But they also differ from one another in some fundamental respects. The differential characteristics of these states are due to several factors like demography, educational and economic development, culture, social life and political history. The strength of any state *vis-a-vis* the centre would be determined by its distance from New Delhi, its locational significance affecting national security, the level of its development, its electoral value in national elections, the quality of its leadership, and above all, the strength of the central government. The political dynamics of each state,

while reflecting some common pattern of behaviour, contain also some special features resulting from its special characteristics.

Orissa, one of the poorest and most backward states of India, is far away from New Delhi, and does not have much of locational strategic significance. With a small population, a large part of which includes tribals and scheduled caste people, Orissa does not count much in national elections—parliamentary as well as Presidential. Inspite of a glorious past with spectacular achievement in the fields of art, literature, architecture, science, trade and military to its credit, Orissa's present is a picture of poverty, illiteracy, corruption, inefficiency, powerlessness, alienation, and political apathy. Though formed in 1936, the state of Orissa is yet to be fully integrated. Disruptive and disintegrative forces like casteism, regionalism and localism are still active. The people of Orissa, caught between a bright past and gloomy present, are unsure of their directions. Though still steeped in feudalism, they bear an intense feeling of grudge against the centre, and if properly ignited, they can prove to be a violent volcano. The political culture of the state, characterised by commonality as well as speciality, has made it sometimes compliant, and some other times deviant.

As in other states, in Orissa also the study of state politics started in 1960s. The few political scientists of the state who shown some interest in research (despite the *anti-research climate* existing in Orissa at that time) were attracted towards fashionable topics of the day like political parties, elections and the role of Governor. The significance of their contributions lay in their attempt to deviate from the traditional research and to study the behaviour of political actors. Their works perhaps suffered from some amount of methodological imperfections. Their "behavioural" studies were primarily based upon published data and *observation from a distance*. But these shortcomings were minor if we remember the constraints under which they were then doing research. They had little resources. Moreover, they hardly received any encouragement from others inculding the authorities to do research with vigour and interest.

During last fifteen years the politics of Orissa has been

well-researched from different angles and perspectives. In early seventies many young political scientists were attracted towards state politics. They started doing research on various aspects of state politics liks rural leadership, coalitions, politics of defection, urban Government and politics, the role of Governor, student politics, political parties factionalism, regionalism, election politics and voting behaviour, state legislatures, political corruption, press as political communicator, and vote banks. The emphasis on Ph. D. and research publications as a recruitment and promotional tool accounted for the sudden rush for research in the state. One of its side-effects was a significant rise in interest to study the politics of the state. State politics, as the subject of research, attracted many mainly because of the instinct of man to know first more about his society and environment. Moreover, the pioneering works of Myron Weiner, Rajni Kothari and Iqbal Narain had created a good impression in the minds of many about research in state politics.

One of the strange features of the evolution or Political Science in Orissa is that *its "founding fathers" were stricty from outside the discipline*. All three of them — K.V. Rao, S.C. Dash and B.B. Jena — were Economists; they, at a later stage, opted for Political Science. However, it may be pointed out that though they were degree-holders and teachers of Economics, they were not completely devoid of training in Political Science. Another aspect of the evolution of Political Science in Orissa was its close linkage with Public Administration. Some of the senior Political Scientists of the state first started as researchers in Public Adminstration. Later they shifted their interest to state politics. This "non-Political Science" aspect of the growth of the discipline of Political Science in general, and that of the study of state politics in particular, in a sense, has been a great blessing. This injected into the study of state politics methodological sophistication. *The pioneers of research on state politics provided it with an inter-disciplinary orientation.* The next generation of Orissan scholars, blessed with this rich research tradition, felt profoundly inspired to improve upon this tradition by their sustained and scientific studies of the government and politics of the state.

The government and politics of any Indian state are complex and multi-facated. The various factors which affect the governmental and political dynamics of a state include its economic condition, political history, social structure, political culture, judicial tradition and communication pattern. Further the governmental structures are many and mutually divergent; so are other political structures and processes. These structures, dynamics and processes tend to be inter-active. It is thus imperative on the part of the scholars to adopt an inter-disciplinary approach for studying these phenomena. Further, it is not possible for political scientists alone to do justice to such large number of diverse, though inter-related, phenomena. A group of scholars, drawn from different fields with inter-disciplinary orientations, can provide a comprehensive and realistic picture of the political dynamics of the state. The present volume has precisely attempted to do that. The contributors include, besides many political scientists, two Economists, two Historians, a Social-Anthropologists, a senior scholar of Industrial Relations, a communication expert, a Law Scholar, a veteran politician with high reputation as a distinguished parliamantarian and as an eminent scholar, and a senior bureaucrat who is also an active researcher. This is the first time that such a large number of eminent scholars from different disciplines and fields came together to produce a scholarly work on state government and politics.

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THE FORMATION OF THE PROVINCE OF ORISSA

A. K. Pattanayak

The history of Orissa dates back to antiquity although it had had different famous names like Kalinga, Utkal, Udra, Kosala and Kangoda, with different boundaries at different times. The geographical boundaries were never fixed once fo all and the extent of these kingdoms went through various changes. But at its height during the Imperial Ganga period its boundary extended from river Ganges in the north to river Godavari in the south and to Kosala in the west. It is surrounded by the states of West Bengal on the north-east, Bihar on the north, Madhya Pradesh on the west, Andhra Pradesh on the south and the Bay of Bengal on the east. Isolated by the geographical barriers of hills and mountains on three sides and the Bay of Bengal on the fourth the land and the people gradually shaped themselves into an independent unit with a distinctive character. The climatic condition, the fertility of the land and the very existence as the gateway between north India and south India, gave it a unique position.

The history of the region became clearer since the 4th century B. C. and since then it has exhibited indomitable spirit of independence and oneness. It was the last important kingdom to come under the Indian mainstream under the Mauryas. When the Mauryan rulers conquered and united entire India under them, Kalinga held itself free till 261 B. C. (the famous Kalinga war of Asoka). Similarly, during the medieval and modern period also Kalinga maintained its independence till the end. But unlike Asoka, neither the Moghuls nor Mahrattas nor the Britishers were able to conquer it in one piece. As such the British conquest in India had no rhyme or norm. However, this conquest by pieces separated the people of Orissa and put them under different governments. The Moghuls who conquered from the south put the districts of Ganjam and Koraput under

the Nizam of Hyderabad. When the Britishers conquered from Bengal Presidency they occupied Balasore district. Thus Orissa and the Oriya speaking people were segregated and placed under different political authorities. And finally this gave rise to the demand for amalgamation. The Oriya were the first in the entire country to demand a separate province on a linguistic basis. As a matter of fact, Orissa and Sindh were the only two provinces created on the basis of language before independence. In other words they set the trend.

The dismemberment of Orissa started from the time of Pratap-rudra Deva. The Bahamani kingdom captured the southern extension from Simhachalam and the Chauhans captured Sambalpur region[2]. Then came the Afghans followed by the Moghuls. Akbar's Orissa consisted of five Sarkaras such as Jaleswar, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Kalinga Dandapat and Rajamahendri. Thus during the 16th century Orissa comprised the whole territory stretching from Tamluk and Midnapur to Rajamahendri. When Hyderabad rose as a prominent power in the south they conquered the two Sarkars of Rajamahendri and Kalinga Dandapat which lay to the south of Tekkali Raghunathpur. Gradually the whole region south of Chilka lake passed into the hands of the Nizam of Hyderabad. By 1707 the Hijli, Tamluk and later Midnapur were annexed to Bengal. By the end of the 18th century the Muslim Orissa was bounded by the river Subarnarekha and Pargana Patanpur and some other Parganas in the north and the Chilka lake in the south[4]. Thus it was mostly during the Muslim rule that the Oriya tracts of both north and south were dismembered.

In 1765 the East India Company secured from the Moghul Emperor, Shah Alam, the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. However by Orissa the grant meant the single district of Midnapore i. e. only upto river Subarnarekha[5]. In the same year Clive also obtained the northern Cirkars consisting of Chicocole, Rajamahendri, Ellore and Gunthur. This northern Cirkar included the district of Ganjam inside it. So by 1765 the two ends of Orissa were captured by the British and the final flicker came in 1803 when they defeated the Mahrattas and captured central Orissa. The conquest of Orissa was not a very difficult task because of the weak position of the Mahrattas. The Central

Orissa remained with Bengal Presidency. South Orissa remained with Madras Presidency. Sambalpur region remained with Central Provinces. Thus the Britishers divided the Oriya speaking region into three separate administrations.

During the rule of the Gajapati kings Oriya language was popular throughout the empire including the coastal areas, hilly tracks, parts of Bengal, Bihar and Telengana[6]. Sarala Das, the celebrated author of the Oriya Mahabharat, was a contemporary of Kapilendradeva. The use of language and its enrichment gave rise to a distinct Oriya culture. The name Odisa or Orissa steadily replaced Kalinga or Utkal. In their royal inscriptions the Gajapati kings took pride that they were rulers of Orissa[7]. But the political dismemberment of Orissa was followed by displacement of Oriya language and culture in those areas. It was found that both official and non-official attempts were made to enforce Bengali in Midnapore region, Telegu in Ganjam and Vizagapatnam and Hindi in Sambalpur, Saraikella and Kharaswan. When parts of Bengal were transferred from the Commissionership of Cuttack to that of Burdwan the language of the court was also changed[8]. "The new Commissioner, for the sake of uniformity in all his districts or some other cause, suppressed Oriya and introduced the Bengali language, and nearly the whole of Midnapur has now became a Bengali speaking district[9]. The Oriya surnames and caste names perpetuated a close social and cultural relationship between the people of Midnapore and those of Orissa. Some of them were either slightly changed or retained as such like Bera(Behera), Geri (Giri), Mahatter (Mahapatra), Mycap, Mytee (Mohanty) and Punda etc. These titles were found in this part of Bengal and nowhere else. Their social and religious rites were almost same as in Orissa[10]. The archaeological remains still existing at Midnapore clearly reflect characteristic Oriya type. The Orissan type of temples in tower form are seen in Sarvamangala and Kanseswar temples at Goubheta.[11]

In the south some Oriya speaking tracts were always under some southern ruler or other. The language, the art and architects, the socio-religious rites and culture of the bordering districts of Andhra were distinctly Oriya. Oriya inscriptions have been found in different temples of Andhra. Inspite of the dominance of

the Telegus the Oriya language continued to be the vernacular of these areas. For all practical purposes the river Godaveri was the dividing line between Andhra and Orissa[12]. In many districts of Andhra the Oriyas and Telegus had to live together leading to interchange of ideas and cultures which consequently developed into a corrupt Oriya mixed with Telegu. Besides the language the caste names and the social rites were the same in these districts as in Orissa. In the food habits, dress and other aspects, the people followed the Oriya system.

Oriya was the language of Singhbhum, Saraikala, Kharaswan, Dhalbhum, Gangpur and Bonai state which were under Chotanagpur Division[13]. But Bengali and Hindi were introduced side by side in all walks of life, in schools, office records and in court documents. The ruling chiefs of these areas had matrimonial relationships with the feudatory chiefs of Orissa[14]. The Oriya law of inheritance, their caste names and social practices were also followed in these districts.

Since the time of Ganga rule, Oriya had been the language of the people of Sambalpur and Chattisgarh states. The language of Khambeswari temple Inscription at Sonepur of Bhanudeva was Oriya[16] According to John Beams, Oriya had been the language of the people as far west as Nagpur[17]. G. A. Grierson also wrote that Oriya language was used in the greater part of the district of Raipur in Central Provinces and also of a number of native states[18]. The people spoke standard Oriya which was also used as the vernacular. The Chattisgarhi dialect used the Oriya script and was almost a language of the Oriyas of the region. As in other places the Oriya castes were also seen there. The surnames were also the same. The people were dressed like Oriyas but not like their Hindi-speaking natives. The Somavamsi rulers who built many important temples in Orissa were originally from this region. Hence there also existed a close architectural affinity between the two regions. The Singbhum region which had enjoyed independent status tendered its allegiance to the British in 1818[19]. When the feudatory chiefs of Saraikala, Kharasovan and Singbhum were called upon to render service to the British government they succumbed and were put under Chotanagpur division[20].

Hence Orissa had, before the coming of the Britishers suffered

territorial distintegration which continued further under them. By 1862, eighteen states of West Orissa were placed with the Central Provinces, the southern territories beyond Chilka were under Madras Presidency, Singhbhum and its surrounding states had gone to Chotanagpur and in the North the whole of Midnapore with Jaleswar and a small part of Balasore had been transferred to Bengal.

The Britishers were conscious of the backwardness and administrative inefficiency of Orissa and sought to bring a sigh of relief to the people. But in the process they created more problems than before. Their taxation seemed heavier than the Marathas or Muslims[21]. Taxes were imposed without proper enquiry of cultivable land. No care was taken to improve education. The use of coins was imposed in the place of the 'cowry' currency which disturbed the financial equilibrium[22]. The Bengal regulations were extended over Orissa which brought in many Bengali officers into Orissa due to their knowledge of laws. As a result, untold hard hardship was faced by the people. Many Zamindaris were auctioned at Calcutta for failure of timely payment and these were purchased by Bengalis at very cheap rates. *Orissa was colonised by the Bengalis, a colony within a colony.*

This ultimately led to open rebellion in 1817, the first spark of Oriya protest, which although failed yet brought a total change in the situation. The Britishers could no more afford to neglect the region. And thus followed a series of measures to improve the area.

The Paika Rebellion made a change in the British attitude towards Orissa which resulted in some significant improvements in the fields of education and administration. The missionaries who came to Orissa after 1822 worked for "the riddance of illiteracy among the Oriyas". In 1823 they opened one English charity school at Cuttak[23], followed by others at Purl and different places. The woods' despatch of 19th July 1954 gave an impetus to the creation of eductional institutions in India. By 1858-59 there were as many as 30 schools in Orissa. Development in education gave rise to other developments. The English officials gradually thought it proper to appoint more Oriyas in government jobs even in high posts. The appointment, for example, of

Chaturbhuja Patnaik in 1835 as the Settlement Officer[24] of Khurda was followed by many other lucrative appointments for Oriyas.

The growth of education, development of communication, increase in the volume of trade and commerce gradually diminished the economic and intellectual backwardness of the people. Establishment of printing press, publication of periodicals and establishment of different cultural institutions helped general consciousness grow. All these factors contributed to the birth and growth of Oriya Nationalism. And all these developments took place in Orissa after the Paika Rebellion.

Language formed the main basis of nationalism. Although there was no visible Oriya nation as such, yet a sense of oneness in society and culture developed through different aspects, of which Oriya language was the main. In the three administrative divisions into which Orissa was divided they not only formed the minority there but also were forced to learn other languages. Ironically the Christian missionaries fostered Oriya language. Attempts were made by the company to establish Oriya as the official language[25]. The British officers were required to pass a minimum Oriya language examination. Inspite of all these attempts the Bengali dominance continued and in 1848 the Collector of Cuttack recommended to substitute Bengali for Oriya as the official language.

To the recommendation of British Officers that Bengali should be made official language of Orissa[26], the reaction of the Oriyas was sharp and immediate. Dr. Rajendralal Mitra, appointed to compile a book on the antiquities of Orissa, argued that it would be an absurdity to maintain Oriya as a separate language and that Bengali should be introduced in Orissa. He argued that Oriya is spoken by only 20 lakh population for which it would be easy to substitute it by Bengali and that the same had already been done successfully at Midnapore. But his arguments were grossly mistaken. First of all the twenty lakh population that he mentioned was related only to the Moghal Bandi area and that figure totally excluded the Oriya speaking population of Midnapore, Ganjam and Sambalpur. There was sharp reaction against the attitude of the government and that of Dr. R. L. Mitra. However, Dr. Mitra later admitted before M. S.

Das that he was wrong and that his assertion was based on the wrong information supply to him by the Bengali and British administrative officers.

Ironically enough one of the first to protest against the proposal was Gourishankar Ray a Bengali (domiciled). In 1837 the first printing press called the Orissa Mission Press was established by the missionaries who published different Oriya monthly magazines like 'Jnaanaruna', 'Prabodhchandrodaya', and 'Arunodaya' from time to time to popularise Christianity[27]. In 1866 the Cuttack Printing Press was established and one periodical, 'Utkal Dipika' began to be published from there with Sri Gourishankar Ray as its editor. It began to ventilate the grievances of the people. In 1868 the Utkal Printing company was established by Fakir Mohan Senapati, the eminent Oriya novelist, at Balasore and started the 'Sambad Bahika'. In 1873 Baikunthanath De established the 'Dey Press' at Balasore and published his 'Utkal Darpan'. These were followed by a host of others who worked hard to arouse the Oriya Nationalism.

Along with journalism, cultural and literary associations also grew up to save Oriya and Orissa from Bengali and British on slaught. Public Libraries and reading club were established to provide the opportunity of reading to the common people. In November 1886 the "Utkal Bhasa Unnati Bidhayini Sabha" was founded at Balasore. At Cuttack another association was formed by the elites of Cuttack who held regular meetings at Cuttack High school. As a matter of fact the Commissioner Mr. Ravenshaw attended one of its meetings on 15th April 1868 and encouraged its members[28]. In 1869 the "Cuttack Debating Club" was founded. In the year 1874 the Utkal Uddipani Sabha was started. These associations drew members from different sections including students and teachers as well. In 1877[29] the 'Orissa Association' was formed under the leadership of Radhanath Ray. Later on, it developed into a full-fledged patriotic organisation with representatives drawn from the entire cross section of the people of Orissa. Eminent persons like M. S. Das, Gouri Shankar Ray and Choudhury Kasinath Das were associated with it. Till the growth of 'Utkal Union Conference' this worked the sole medium of national awakening.

Language agitation was also taken up in the occupied areas

of the south and west like Berhampur and Sambalpur. Since south was under Madras Presidency, Telegu was dominating over Oriya. The Telegu teachers and officers filled most of the posts. So far from being the medium of teaching, Oriya was not even taught in many schools. At one stage even the Director of Public Instruction of Madras requested the government to abolish teaching of Oriya which according to him was a "semi-barbarous language".[30] Similarly in the Sambalpur region, Hindi was imposed on the Oriya speaking population. Although more than two thirds of the population were Oriyas, yet Hindi was imposed upon them by the government of Central Provinces. In both the cases there were representations, agitations and appeals by the people. So taken together, by the end of 19th century there was a language agitation throughout the province.

The English administrators and the administration never came in direct contact with the people and solely depended upon the report of the subordinates, It was but natural that small officers who were normally non-Oriyas recommended the substitution of Oriya. Nevertheless there were some British Officers who got involved in the process and did things by themselves. Mr. H. G. Cook, the Commissioner of Orissa division, gave a report known as 'Cook's Report' wherein he suggested the extension of one territory by the entire Oriya speaking population. The people were greatly encouraged by 'Cook's Report'. M. S. Das wrote a letter to the Secretary of State for India with a copy to the British Parliamentary Member Sir Charles Dike[31] wherein it was pointed out that Hindi should not be imposed upon the people of Sambalpur.

This was the first visible success of the people of Orissa and it encouraged them, united them and instilled in them a hope of success. M. S. Das held a meeting at Cuttack to thank the government.[32] In the same year a memorial was sent to Lord Curzon which pleaded for readjustment of territory and drew attention to " a limb separated from the body".[33] Thus language agitation gave rise to territorial agitation. The two important factors that contributed towards the awakening of territorial integrity of Orissa on language basis were the language movement and the *Naanka* famine. These two together made them feel that the cause of sufferingwas t diembermment of Oriy shea

speaking people under three administrations.

In the beginning the leaders of Orissa were not clear and certain about their ideas, aims and objectives. They also widely differned on their views. However, the only thing they wanted in common was the unification of all Oriya speaking people under one administration. Some wanted the United Oriyas under Bengal Presidency. Some wanted to be merged with Central Provinces and some others wanted to be with Madras Presidency. But initially they could never imagine a separate province for themselves. There were many arguments for and against each point of view. To begin with it was argued that the Bengalis were too very domineering and that the province would be too big to be under one Chief Commissioner, who will not even be able to see through its length and breadth during his tenure. Oriyas were the worst sufferers under the Madras Presidency and they had no identity of their own as against the Telegus. Further, it was only here that there was popular opposition to this movement. The Telegus of Berhampur united and submitted a petition to the government against their merger with Orissa. Hence finally it was agreed upon that to be with Bengal would be the best solution due to the fact that it was the most developed Presidency, had a High Court, Revenue Board and the language was more akin to Oriya than to Hindi and Telegu. Hence the Utkal Union Conference held on 30 and 31 December 1903, resolved supporting the merger of Oriya speaking territories under Bengal[34].

In 1905 in the process of Partition of Bengal, Orissa was partially united. Sambalpur was united to the main body and was placed under Bengal Presidency but Ganjam was not touched. So out of the three separate parts two were somehow united.

Lord Curzon, in 1903, greatly supported the union of Orissa on language basis. He wrote letters to the governments of Bengal, Madras and Central Provinces asking their opinion on the issue of unification of the Oriya speaking tracts under one single administration i. e. under Bengal thereby relieving the governments of Madras and Central Provinces from the burden of ruling people of a different language. The government report read " Nowhere are these drawbacks more conspicuous than among the Oriya speaking people, distributed, as has been poin_

ted out among three administrations and source of constant anxiety to each other''.[35] The government of India realised the problem of Oriya speaking people and suggested remedial measures. It suggested unity to Sambalpur, Ganjam and Orissa and to be put under Bengal. As the report stated,"Such a scheme would solve the question of language once for all. The change would relieve both Central Provinces and Madras of a troublesome excrescence upon administrative system and would result in handing over the Oriya problem to one government alone '.[36]

The Utkal Union Conference in its meeting held on 30 and 31 December 1903 supported the idea and expressed its gratitude towards Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India. This clearly speaks of the limited nature of the ambition of the people of Orissa. By then the movement had not taken a separatist trend.

Andrew Fraser, as the Chief Commissioner of Central Provinces, had expressed his difficulty to maintain Sambalpur. In 1904 he was the Lt. Governor of Bengal. When this Riseley Report came, he welcomed the idea. The government of Central Provinces agreed to transfer its Oriya speaking tracts (with the exception of Chandrapur and Phuljhar Zamindaris).

But the government of Madras under Lord Ampthill opposed the move and expressed its unwillingness to transfer the districts of Ganjam and Vizagapatnam to Bengal. He considered that geographically, commercially and ethnologically this region was inseparable from Madras. The systems of judiciary, taxation and revenue collection were different in this region. And hence he rejected the idea.[37]

However, even though Ganjam could not be united, yet Sambalpur region was merged with Orissa in 1905 which was the first important step in the process of formation. On 1st September 1905 Sambalpur was transferred to Orissa minus the Chandrapur Padmapur estates and the Phuljhar Zamindari. Later Gangpur, Banai and the five states of Patna, Kalahandi, Sonepur, Bamra and Redhakhol were transferred to Orissa.

Proposals for united Orissa followed by efforts of the Oriyas through Utkal Union Conference continued. Periodical meetings of the Conference were held from 1904 to 1911. In 1907 representations were sent to the 'Royal Commission on Decentralisation'

asking for a Chief Commissionership for United Orissa.[38] In 1908 M. S. Das went to England to meet the British government and placed the cause of a separate Orissa State.

In 1911 when as per the reform measures of Lord Hardinge, the partition of Bengal was undone, in the process a new province was created consisting of Bihar and Orissa including Chotanagpur, with its Legislative Council and capital at Patna. The proposal said "The Oriyas, like the Biharis, have little in common with the Bengalis and we propose to leave Orissa (and Sambalpur) with Bihar and Chotanagpur. We believe that this arrangement will accord well with popular sentiment in Orissa and will be welcome to Bihar as presenting a sea-board to that province".[39] This measure was acceptable neither to the Oriyas nor to the Bengalis nor to the Biharis. However, the main demand of the Oriyas i. e. the merger of Ganjam was totally side tracked. When this issue was being debated in the House of Lords, Lord Curzon, by then a member, remarked, "This is a blunder that cannot remain permanent. Were the Orissans an agitating people, which they are not, they would soon make their protest heard".[40] When Bengal was reunited on the basis of common language and tradition the question of Orissa which continued to be with Bihar was totally neglected, M.S. Das in his Presidential address to the Utkal Union Conference retorted "The cow has no similarity with the tiger. The goat has no similarity with the cow. So the tiger and the goat can live peacefully together".[41] And that is how Orissa was placed alongside Bihar.

The demand for amalgamation became intensive and Utkal Union Conference became its main centre. Annual meetings were held at different places and regular memorandums were sent to the government. However, the people of Ganjam took extra interest and care in this connection. They formed another organisation called "the Utkal Milan Samaj" in 1912 to work vigorously for the merger.

The students of the state also contributed to the movement. They met for the first time in 1913 during the 9th session of Utkal Union Conference at Puri and resolved to meet annually to help the cause. Pandit Gopabandhu Das and B. S. Das were the leaders of this students' forum.

The movement, in particular, gained momentum in South Orissa. The 10th session of the Utkal Union Conference was held at Paralakhemundi in 1914 with Vikram Dev Verma as its President. The Raja of Manjusa took keen interest in this session and since then the leaders of south Orissa were immensely active. They met the successive governors of Madras for their merger with Orissa.

There was however, some disunity among the Oriyas in their demand for unity. The Rajah of Dharakote in his speech in the Madras Legislative Council in 1914 pleaded that at least the Oriyas of Ganjam and Jeypore be united leaving aside those of Vizagapatnam district.[42] The Oriyas of Vizagpatnam Agency organised themselves under Vikram Dev Verma and continued the agitation through their "Oriya Samaja".

The opposition of the Telegus to the Amalgamation movement at one stage acted as a blessing in disguise. Although they were in minority in these areas yet they vehemently opposed this demand. However some distinguished Telegu leaders realised that the Oriyas had a just cause. Dr. B. Pattabhisitaramaya proposed to exclude Oriyas from Andhra and the consequent formation of Andhra Province took place. He was supported by many other important Telegu leaders. They had to support the amalgamation of Oriya speaking areas for creation of a separate Andhra Province.

In 1917 Lionel Curtis, a member of the "Round-Table-Group" in London, suggested the creation of Orissa as a separate Province and strongly criticised the Province of Bihar and Orissa as one.[43] This move by a British officer greatly encouraged the leaders in Orissa

When M. S. Montagu was appointed as the Secretary of State for India in 1917 he visited India extensively to study the situation and suggest reform measures. The Oriyas held meetings in different places and finally, drafted a memorandum to be submitted to him. On 11 December 1917 M. S. Das and the Rajah of Kanika, the then Finance member of the Bihar and Orissa Province, waited upon M.S. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, the then Governor General. The latter were convinced about the demands and argument of the Oriyas. But in general they opposed the division of provinces on the basis of language and

race which according to them required constitutional changes. However, they were convinced about the demands of the Oriyas and mentioned in the report; "In Orissa and Bihar at all events it seems to us that the possibility of instituting subprovinces need not be excluded from consideration at an early date".[44] Although the report was frustrating for the Oriyas it held out a distant ray of hope for them.

In the meantime, the movement for amalgamation became vigorous. The Utkal Union Conference held its annual meeting and discussed matters. District committees were organised to take the mutter to the masses. The Oriya nationalism and the movement marched simultaneously with the Indian freedom movement. It rarely opposed the latter. It worked for the Indian freedom movement and at the same time fought for Orissa province. Pandit Gopabandhu Das said in 1920 in his Presidential address to the Utkal Union Conference that Oriya nationalism was subordinate to Indian nationalism and that Oriyas were first Indians then Oriyas. Many prominent leaders like Sachidananda Sinha, M.S. Das, Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo and others who were otherwise members of Bihar Orissa Legislative Council moved a number of resolutions supporting the cause of Orissa.[45] But almost all of them failed to achieve any sympathy from the government.

In 1921 a move was initiated in the Indian Legislative Assembly to reorganise provinces on linguistic[46] basis and in the resolution moved by A. B. Lathe the example of Oriyas under Bihar province was stated. The stand taken by the Government of India was that nothing could be done unless it came up from the respective local governments. However, when the demands became pressing the Government of India sought the attention of the governments of Bengal, Bihar-Orissa, Madras and Central Provinces on the issue of Oriya amalgamation in 1921. The reply of the respective governments was received by 1922. The government of Madras opposed the transfer on the grounds of administrative and financial complications and the opposition of Telegus. The government of Bengal reported that the Oriyas of Midnapore were averse to union with Orissa. The Government of Central Provinces opposed the demand for transfer, except Khariar, and the reply of the Government of Bihar-Orissa was in

the same tone. Since these replies did not satisfy the Government of India, it appointed two officers to determine the actual position, a move which was opposed by the Oriyas as a delaying tactic.

In 1924 the 'Reforms Enquiry Committee (Muddiman Committee) came to India to review the situation, Strong arguments were placed by M.S. Das and others before the committee but for nothing, and it recommended that redistribution of territory should not precede any constitutional advance.

In the same year the Government of India appointed two officers, C. L. Phillips and A.C. Duff[17] to make an on-the-spot enquiry and to assess the general feeling of the population towards merger in Vizagapatnam districts. The Maharaja of Jeypore opposed the amalgamation whereas the people in general supported the move. However, the Commission took into account the census report and reported that excepting Koraput, Jeypore and Nowrangpur nowhere did the Oriyas forme a majority in Vizagapatnam. This was the stage where the Oriyas of Tekkali, Tarla, Manjusa, Jalantara, Baruva and Bobili were separated from the main body. Meetings were held in different parts of Ganjam wherein the popular opinion was overwhelmingly in support of amalgamation. Finally the Commission recommended amalgamation but not of the entire area. However one important thing that they did was that they also recommended the amalgamation of the Agency tracts as well.[18]

All the respective provincial governments opposed the move of the Central government on the ground of financial loss and adminisrative difficulty. When the central and provincial governments were quarrelling over amalgamation of Oriya territory under any of these provinces the Oriyas made it clear to the government that nothing less than a separate province would satisfy them. They were to be united by being separated from others. The decision insisting on the financial pre-condition was much resented by the people.

When Simon Commission came in 1928 the Indian National Congress boycotted the Commisson on the grounds that all its seven members were Englishmen. The Oriya leaders were sharply divided over the issue. When the majority of them wanted to boycott it, some of them felt the need to press the demands. In

any case a memorandum was submitted by the Oriyas. The Commission's report was quite favourable. As regards Bihar and Orissa the Commission mentioned that it was most artificial and defective unit of all provinces of India from linguistic and cultural points of view. "How artificial the union of Orissa with Bihar really is, may be illustrated by the fact that deputation from Orissa, which attended the Commission at Patna made journey by travelling via Calcutta".[49] The Commission also noted that Oriyas in large number lived in Madras Presidency and finally recommended division on the basis of language.[50] Though the Commission was generally against redrawing the map of India yet they made particular deviation with regard to Sind and Orissa and recommended special consideration. On the basis of this report a sub-committee was appointed for a detailed investigation of the case of Oriyas.

The sub-committee with Major Attlee as Chairman consisted of Suhrawardy of Indian Central Committee, the Raja of Kanika and Rai Bahadur Laxmidhar Mohanty as members. They recommended the creation of a separate province consisting of Orissa division, Angul, feudatory states, parts of Mohanpur and Gopiballavapur from Bengal and Ganjam district from Madras and Khariar from Central Province. It neglected to include Singhbhum and Jeypore. The reaction of the various governments was sharp to the report. The government of Madras strongly opposed this. But the government of Bihar and Orissa and Bengal accepted the inevitable and only pressed for immediate appointment of a Boundary Commission as they felt that the division of territory was more than minor adjustments.

The Raja of Parlakhemundi was the Oriya delegate to three round table conferences in London in 1930, 1931 and 1932 where he strongly advocated the demand for the creation of a new Orissa province and succeeded in getting the unanimous support of all members.[51] Hence a boundary commission was appointed to settle the boundary. S. P. O'Donnel was the Chairman of the committee and the other members were T. R. Phockun, H. M. Mehetta, Raja of Paralakhemundi, Sachidananda Sinha and Ray Bahadur C. V. S. Narasingha Rajaguru. The committee considered memorandums, met people and heard personal claims and finally came to a conclusion. They excluded Midnapore and

Bankura in Bengal, Singhbhum, Manbhum and Ranchi from Bihar and Khariar, Phuljhar and Padmapur in Central provinces and Ichhapur, Manjusa, Budarsingi, Jalanter, Tekkali and Tarala from Orissa.

As natural, the reaction to the O'Donnel committee report was very spontaneous and immediate. It was not acceptable to any section of the people. They raised a hue and cry in all the respective legislative councils to scrap the report and to give up all the Oriya speaking areas.

On 17th March 1933 the British government published a "White Paper" on constitutional reforms in India where two new provinces of Sindh and Orissa were created.[52] But the boundary allotted to Orissa was far from satisfactory as it virtually accepted the report of O'Donnel Committee. However, this was the first time that the British government had officially announced a Separate Province for Orissa. The reaction to this White Paper was mixed among the Oriyas. Some of the leaders wanted that first the province should be created as proposed then claims can be put forward for other places while the others wanted to boycott the White Paper into to what to speak of the Province of Orissa.

The "White Paper" was referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee and in the mean time an Orissa Administration Committee was created to report on possible problems after the creation of the separate province. J. A. Bubback was the Chairman of the Committee. It selected Cuttack as the provincial capital and suggested other measures in this regard.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee in its report also suggested the creation of the new province and added some more territories like a part of Jeypore estate and Parlakhemundi town and a part of the estate.[53] These recommendations were accepted by the House of Commons. Accordingly it was incorporated in the Government of India Bill. When the Government of India Bill was under discussion in the House of Commons many members opposed the creation of Orissa province. It was Major Attlee who successfully thwarted the opposition move. G. Nicholson, in the course of his discussion praised Attlee as the "father of Orissa" and "god-father" of the new province of Orissa.[54] According to Section 289[55] of the Government of India Act 1935, the new

provinces of Sindh and Orissa were created.

After the passing of the Act, steps were take to make necessary arrangments. On 26th January 1936 the Order was issued to the Indian Orders Committee. The inaugural date was suggested to be 1st April 1936.

As proposed, on 1st April 1936 the province of Orissa with Cuttack as its capital came into being as one of the eleven Governors' Provinces in India. Sir John Austen Hubback was appointed as its first Governor. The new province comprised an area of 32,695 square miles with a population of 8,043,681. Its boundary was much in the line suggested by the Joint Parliamentary Committee. A meeting was convened on 1 April by the Governor which was attended by different Oriya Associations. For the last time the Oriya members attended the Bihar Orissa Legislative Council on 28 March 1936.

However, although the new province was born as a result of Oriya rising, it was not to the satisfaction of Oriya nationalism. All the Oriya speaking population were not unified. A large part of them remained outside it. The province consisted of six districts Puri, Cuttack, Balasore, Samabalpur, Koraput and Ganjam. Kondhmals remained with Ganjam and Angul with Cuttack. The birth of the province did not put an end to the Oriya rising which continued to fight for the amalgamation of rest of the Oriyas who still continued to remain under different governments. The leaders continued their unfinished task. However, Oriya nationalism was an eye opener to the entire country and Orissa was the first state to be born on language basis, a system which was followed in India after independence.

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2

FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN ORISSA

J. K. Samal

Orissa was last to be conquered by the British. It also joined the freedom war against the British Government relatively late. This was mainly due to two factors—first its geographic location. The British invaders tried to occupy Orissa much later as the latter was far away from the metropolitan centres which the British occupied and administered first. The same would partly explain why the fire of freedom war spread to Orissa[1] late. Secondly, its vast illiteracy, proverty and ignorance stood in the way of the rise of the freedom struggle in it for a long time. A revolution is usually led by a middle class which was absent in Orissa till the end of the 19th century. Only after such a class came into being in the early 20th Century was the war of freedom launched by Oriyas.

After the 1866 famine which led to the death of one-third of the population of Orissa, the British government as well as the missionaries took some steps to spread education and develop communication lines in it. As a result, by the end of the 19th Century, many schools were established and different areas were linked by the construction of roads. The printing press was started and many periodicals and literary magazines published. These measures had two important effects. First, there arose a small but influential educated class which sought to articulate the grievances of people against the government and feudal rulers. Secondly, slowly but steadily, the message of patriotism spread among the people. This was made easier by the establishment of several associations in different parts of the state.[2]

Swadeshi Movement in Orissa

The partition of Bengal had adverse reactions all over the country including Orissa. In a meeting at Cuttack on 20th August 1905

the significance of Swadesh and Boycott was explained to the people. In a fiery speach Madhu Sudan Das, an eminent Oriya statesman, urged the people to emulate the Japanese in boycotting foreign goods. He said : "General Togo of Japan uses the shoes made in his own country, however uncouth they may be." Similar meetings were organised in Puri, Balasore, Sambalpur and other places. Some Bengali nationalists came to address these meetings and help in vitalising the Swadeshi Movement in Orissa.

"Bande Mataram' was taken as the soul-stirring slogan. Swadeshi ideas were also popularised by vernacular newspapers. The *Prajabandhu* of Ganjam, *Manorama* of Baripada and *Sambalpur Hitaishini* of Bamra played significant roles in the matter.

The government decided to effect partition of Bengal from 16th October 1905. That day was incidentally the Rakhi Purnima. At the suggestion of Rabindranath, it was to be observed as the *Rakhi Bandhan Divas.* This day was also observed in different areas of Orissa. Rakhis were tied even on the wrists of Muslims.

The Swadeshi Movement gave a great fillip to the revival of cottage industries in Orissa. Among other things the weaving industry received greatest attention. The-well-to-do people in certain areas, being imbued with deep patriotic fervour, encouraged the weavers to produce fine handloom textile for them. On auspicious occasions, even many educated and upper class people of Orissa, instead of purchasing Manchester cloth, began to use indigeneous clothes such as Berhampuripata, Maniabandi Saree. At Parlkhemundi a Co-operative weaving Society was established with initial capital of Rs. 10,000/- to produce handloom products. In Banpur area of Puri district fine cane goods were produced.

The anniversary of the historic Swadeshi Sabha of Calcutta was observed in Orissa on 7 August 1907 in the Cuttack Town Hall with a Swadeshi *hat* (Exhibition), where handloom fabrics, hosiery goods, tobacco, bamboo and wood works were available. No one was seen returning from the exhibition without purchasing some goods.

Gopabandhu Das, having realised the importance of national education, established the Ekarma Academy at Bhubaneswar with the help of two Sanskrit Scholars, Basudeb Rath and Sudarsan Nanda and the Bengal revolutionary, Shashibhusan Ray Chou-

dhury. It was designed on the model of a national school, but lack of funds stood on its way and the school had to be closed down after a few years. He also laid the foundation of the Satyabadi Bana Vidyalaya at Sakhigopal on 12 August 1909. The contribution of this school to the national and literary life of Orissa is inestimable.

Revolutionary Activities in Orissa

A few patriots of Bengal felt that without arms it was not possible to drive out the British from India. After the outbreak of the First World War they contacted Germany, the enemy of Britain, to Secretly supply arms to them. But it did not take the British government in India long to discover this plan. After that, some of these revolutionaries led by Jatindra Nath Mukherjee fled from Calcutta and tried to enter Balasore through the Nilagiri State. In September 1915 they were surrounded by the police. After some minor exchange of fire they surrendered. One of them had already died before the encounter was over. Being severely wounded Jatindra, known in Orissa as "Bagha Jatin", was carried to the hospital where he died on 10th September. Two others were sentenced to death. One other, given life imprisonment, died in the prison.

In the eyes of Britishers, they were "terrorists". But there is little doubt that they were great patriots and revolutionaries, and few could have dared in those days what they tried to achieve. It is immaterial whether they could have militarily defeated the British government or not. What was important was the force, vitality and depth of their patiotic fervour and their determination to fight to the last for the cause of their country.[3]

Non-Cooperation Movement

During the First World War the British government had promised that henceforth its policy in India would be to help "progressive realisation of responsible government" in it. But the Congress leaders realized that the British government did little to fulfil this promise after the war was over. In a special session held in Calcutta in September 1920 the Congress decided to boycott

government offices as a part of Gandhiji's Non-Cooperation Movement. In its annual session held at Nagpur in December 1920, final decision on the launching of Non-Cooperation Movement was taken. It also decided to reorganise Congress Committees on the lingustic basis. This decision had special importance for the Congress people of Oriya speaking areas which were yet to be put together to make a separate province.

Thirty five delegates from Orissa including Gopabandhu Das, Niranjan Pattanaik, Bhagirathi Mahapatra, Jagabandhu Singh, Mukunda Prasad Das, Jadumani Mangaraj and H. K. Mahatab attended the Nagpur Session. On their return to Orissa they set up the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee as the organisational base to lunch the non-cooperation programme. The Committee consisted of Gopabandhu Das, Ekram Rasool, Bhagirathi Mahapatra and Brajbhandhu Das as the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Joint Secretary respectively. The District Committees were gradually formed. Different members were entrusted with the responsibility of carrying on the Congress Movement in different parts of Orissa : H. K. Mahatab (Balasore district), Jadumani Mangaraj (Kendrapara sub-divison of Cuttack district), Sri R. K. Bose (Jajpur sub-division of Cuttack district), Bhagirathi Mahapatra (Cuttack Sadar Sub-Division with headquarters at Alakashram, Jagatsingpur), Jagabandhu Singh and Krupasindhu Misra (Puri district), Pandit Nilakantha Das (Sambalpur district) and Niranjan Patnaik (Ganjam district). Besides, Pandit Godavarish Misra took charge of the Congress Movement in the outlying Oriya-speaking tract of Singbhum.

Gandhiji's visit to Orissa in the last week of March 1921 created unprecedented enthusiasm among the masses in Orissa. He addressed huge gatherings at Cuttack, Bhadrak, Satyabadi and Berhampur in the course of six days. By 20th June 1921, Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee collected 21,000 rupees for Tilak Suraj Fund; 39,000 people became Congress members; and 16,000 spinning wheels were introduced in Orissa.

Many young men of Orissa like H. K. Mahatab, Nityananda Kanungo, Naba Krushna Choudhury, Nanda Kishore Das and Raj Krishna Bose left their studies in the college and joined the Non-cooperation Movement. Bhagirathi Mohapatro, Jagabandhu Singh and a few others gave up their legal practice to join the

movement. Gopabandhu Choudhury, Nila Kantha Das, Pandit Lingraj Mishra, Surendra Nath Das, Mohammed Hanif and few others resigned from Government Service and devoted themselves to Congress work.

To organise Congress activity and spread among the villagers the ideas of Non-cooperation, some centres like Swaraj Ashram at Cuttack, Alakashram at Jagatsinghpur, Swaraj Mandira at Balasore were established. The depressed class people were welcome to be the members of the Congress organisation. Some newspapers like the 'Samaj' and 'Utkal Sevak' played an important role in arousing the public to take part in the Non-cooperation movement.

As a member of students left schools and colleges run or aided by the Government, the Congress leaders decided to establish national schools and colleges for educating their children in a new system. In Orissa also some national schools were established. The first school on this model was established at Sambalpur. It was organised under the guidance of Pandit Nila Kantha Das. Subsequently, the Satyabadi High School and the Chakradharpur High School severed their connection with the government and became national schools. National Schools were also established at Jagatsinghpur, Cuttak, Soro and other places[4].

The Non-cooperation movement led to serious peasant unrest in Kanika. Although the Raja of Kanika, Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, was a man of public spirit, in his big estate the peasanfs suffered from undue exactions in hands of his subordinate officials. This agrarian disturbance was taken by the government as a part of the Non-Cooperation movement. The Congress leaders like Gopabandhu Das and Bhagirathi Mahapatro were forbidden to intervene in the Kanika affairs, and subsequently they were arrested for violation of the government order[5].

It is worth noting that Pandit Gopabandhu Das went to Calcutta to organise boycott of foreign goods there. He was successful to a great extent. It was reported that the business in Burra buzzar became static.

The Non-cooperation movement was in full swing in Orissa during 1921. Picketing before the shops dealing in foreign liquor and cloth was widely practised. The use of *charakha*

became more and more popular. The village Panchayats were established in some places for arbitration of petty civil and criminal cases.

Government undertook some serious measures to suppress the movement. A series of arrests were made, Rajkrushna Bose became the first political prisoner in Orissa. Other leaders, like Gopabandhu Das, Jadumani Mangraj, Harekrushna Mahtab (and twenty four others) were taken into custody. By the end of 1922, almost all Congress leaders in Orissa were thrown behind bars.

But the tragic incident at Chauri Chaura in February 1922 all of a sudden changed the course of events and the Congress Working Committee immediately resolved to suspend the mass civil disobedience movement indefinitely. Only the programme of constructive work was to continue as before. Although the Non-cooperation movement was yet to strike roots among the masses, it succeeded in creating a wide nationalist awakening in Orissa[6].

Civil Disobedience Movement

By 1928 it was clear that the country was once again in a mood of struggle. The Lahore Session of the Congress of 1929 gave voice to this new mood. It passed a resolution declaring Poorna Swaraj to be the Congress objective. To achieve this objective, the Congress announced the launching of a civil disobedience movement. The Civil Disobedience Movement started on 12th March with Gandhi's famous Dandi March.

The long sea coast of Orissa produced find salt since time immemorial but the British authorities had stopped its production. It was causing misery to the poor people of coastal Orissa and the salt tax was considered "the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint". When Gandhi decided to break the salt law, the people of Orissa welcomed it.

The Utkal Provincial Congress Committee at its meeting on 16th March 1930 at Balasore decided to launch the movement for breaking the salt law in Orissa and Gopabandhu Choudhury was given the charge of organising it.

The historic Satyagraha started in Orissa when Acharya Harihar Das led the first batch of volunteers for manufacturing salt at Inchudi in Balasore, Rama Devi and Malati Devi felicitated the volunteers. The march started on 6th April 1930, the famous Dandi March Day of Gandhiji. The second batch march on 6th April 1930, the third on 13th April 1930, the 4th and 5th on 16th April 1930[7].

Most of the leaders including Gopabandhu Choudhury, Atal Bihari Acharya, R. K. Bose, Govinda Misra, L. N. Mishra, Bira Kishore Das and H. K. Mahatab were arrested. Smt. Sarala Devi, a prominent woman leader was also arrested. Sardar Surendra, a prominent leader of the movement, was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

In the district of Cuttack, Kujang was an important centre where a large number of Satyagrahis participated in the movement. Its special feature was the participation of Bhagyabati Devi, the head of the Kujang Raj family. Encouraged by her decision to join the movement, at least 500 women came forward to prepare the contraband salt. In the district of Puri, several centres at Kuhudi, Singheswari and Latra were opened under the guidance of Nilakantha Das, who had given up his seat in the Legislative Assembly again after his re-election. Jagannath Rath, Mohan Das and other Congress volunteers also broke the salt law[8].

In the district of Ganjam, Huma, the traditional centre of salt manufacture, was chosen by the Congress leaders as their venue of Satyagraha. About sixteen hundred people participated in the preparation of salt of 9th May under the leadership of Niranjana Patnaik, Biswanath Das and Sarala Devi. Among the participants about one-fourth were women who enthusiastically joined the struggle. The people also purchased contraband salt without any hesitation.

Strong repressive measures of the Government failed to check the progress of salt Satyagraha. With the advent of the rainy season, when it was not possible to manufacture salt on the sea-shore, the Congress workers undertook picketing before excise shops, boycott of foreign cloth, spread of Khadi, formation of village Panchayats and such other works. Large number of palm trees were cut in order to dissuade the people from

preparing country liqour. In some places rhe people also refused to pay the Chaukidari tax. At Srijang near Inchudi a police party was manhandled by an infuriated mob on 12th July 1930. It led to the arrest of 54 persons and imposition of punitive tax amounting to six thousand rupees on the villagers. Inspite of the absence of prominent leaders, the people continued their struggle with courage and determination.

In January 1931, the Salt Satyagraha was resumed in many places in coastal Orissa. Sardar Surendra organised the movement at Inchudi against and many volunteers including women began the work in right ernest. Such operations also continued at Krushnapur, Kakatpur, Latra and other places. On the whole, the Salt Satyagraha achieved spectacular success in Orissa[9].

When the movement was in the highest crescendo, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in March 1931 came like an anti-climax, dampening the spirit of nationalism. For a few years thereafter there was a stalemate in the Congress activities in Orissa. Gandhi's programme of individual civil obedience could not have much impact. But his visit to Orissa in May 1934 rejuvenated the Congress workers to brisk activities. He visited Sambalpur, Angul, Puri, Cuttack, Jajpur and Bhadrak holding meetings and discussions to uplift the depressed classes. Gandhiji's tour had, in particular, great impact upon the Harijans who, in large numbers, joined the freedom struggle.

Quit India Movement

The Second World War broke out in September 1939 when Nazi Germany invaded Poland in pursuance of Hitler's scheme of German expansion. The British Government now desperately wanted the active cooperation of Indians in the war effort. To secure this cooperation, it sent to India in March 1942 a mission headed by a Cabinet Minister, Sir Stafford Cripps, who had earlier been a radical member of the Labour Party and a strong supporter of the Indian National Movement. Even though Cripps declared that the aim of British policy in India was "the earliest possible realisation of self-government in India", detailed negotiations between him and the Congress leaders broke down.

The failure of the Cripps Mission embittered the people of India. While they still fully sympathised with the anti-Fascist forces, they felt that the existing political situation in the country had become intolerable. The Congress now decided to take active steps to compel the British to accept the Indian demand for independence. The All India Congress Committee met at Bombay on 8th August 1942. It passed the famous 'Quit India' Resolution and proposed the starting of a non-violent mass struggle under Gandhi's leadership to achieve this aim.

In Orissa, as in other parts of the country, soon thereafter all important Congress leaders were rounded up by the police. The P. C. C., D. C. C., and other allied organisations were declared unlawful ones.[10]

The novel feature of the August Revolution was that, people in the villages joined the movement in large numbers. The students of the Ravenshaw College launched a strike which was followed by other educational institutions in the Cuttack town.

On 14th August, some students of the Ravenshaw College set fire to the Office Room of the College which damaged records and furnitures. In many places, particularly in Jajpur and Kendrapara Sub-division, people attacked post Offices, Canal Revenue Offices and P. W. D. Bungalows and some of them were burnt.

The August Revolution took a violent turn in the district of Balasore in which the maximum number of persons lost their lives. The people not only disobeyed the laws of the Government, organised 'hartals' 'and carried on picketings in front of Government offices and courts but also set fire to dak bungalows Post Offices and Police Stations, cut telegraph lines and in some cases also stopped the payment of taxes and rents. On 17 August 1942, a large number of villagers attacked the police station of Bhandari Pokhari and set fire to it. They also burnt the post office of the locality and demolished a road-bridge to prevent the police force from reaching the place. The Government took strong action against the people of the locality and a punitive fine of six thousand rupees was imposed.

The most atrocious crime was committed at Eram in Basudevpur Police station where the police party opened fire on the unarmed villagers and killed 29 people on the spot. that was

the most tragic event of the August Revolution in Orissa and perhaps nowhere in India were so many people killed in a single police action, during the Revolution[11].

One most striking feature of the movement in this province was the spontaneous participation of the politically backward hilly tribes of the Koraput district. One violent incident occurred in Maithili. A large number of tribal people under the leadership of Lakhman Nayak, the most prominent Congress Worker of the area, attacked the Maithile Police Station on 21st August 1942. One forest guard was killed and some Government servants were injured in the scuffle. The police opened fire which caused the death of five persons and seventeen agitators were injured including their leader Lakshman Nayak. Lakshman Nayak was arrested and subsequently he was sentenced to death and hanged on 29th August 1943.[12]

Another important feature of the movement in Orissa was the underground activities of the Congress Socialist leaders under the leadership of Surendra Nath Dwivedy. They planned a secret organisation and through bulletins incited the public to acts of violence to paralyse the Government. It had tremendous influence on the masses who were prepared to do anything in the name of the country. With their arrests, as the authorities hoped, underground activities began to cease.

The Government followed a stern policy of repression to suppress the Quit India Movement. Severe and atrocious actions such as, arrests, convictions, imposition of fines, lathi charges, firing and beating were done all in common. 4357 persons including 64 women were arrested and put into prison. Firing was resorted at 9 places resulting in 74 deaths and injuries to hundreds. Heavy fines amounting to Rs. 27,750/- were imposed on many villages and were rigourously collected.

By October 1942, the situation in Orissa was normal. The public enthusiasm evinced during the months August-October gradually subsided and ultimately faded away. Lack of adequate organisation, loyalty of the bureaucracy, police and military and above all the differences among the political parties and leaders in Orissa contributed to the decline of the movement in Orissa.[13]

The Attainment of Independence

The Revolt of 1942 was infact short lived. Its .importance lay in the fact that it demonstrated the depath that the nationalist feeling had reached in the country and the great capacity for struggle and sacrifice that the people had developed.

After the suppression of the revolt of 1942, there was hardly any political activity inside the country till the war ended in 1945. After the war, the conservatives were replaced by the Labour Party, many of whose members supported the Congress demands. On 20th February 1947, Clement Attlee, British premier, declared that, the British would quit India by June 1948.

On 15th August 1947, India celebrated with joy its first day of freedom. The dream was now a reality.

On the eve of the attainment of India's Independence, the joy of the people of Orissa had been overwhelming and unlimited. The prolonged and courageous struggle of the people of Orissa for independence from foreign rule, no doubt, forms a glorious landmark in the history of modern Orissa.

Conclusion

Before Orissa became a separate state in 1936, the freedom war of the Oriyas was intertwined with their movement for a separate state. Except some minor strains, the two movements did reinforce each other. After 1936, the freedom war in the state gained greater unity, harmony, strength and momentum. Although at the leadership level, it was a bourgeois phenomenon, it gradually developed into a mass movement. It was relatively more intense and effective in the coastal districts. However, in course of time, it spread to interior areas even the tribals showed exemplary course and sacrifice for the sake of their motherland. The participation of all minorities, Harijans, Advasis and women was significant.

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3

PRAJA MANDAL MOVEMENT IN THE ORISSA STATES

J. K. Samal

The British Orissa contained mainly the three districts of Balasore Cuttack and Puri. The areas which constitute modern Orissa, besides the above three districts, were scattered under different political jurisdictions. The major part of those areas remained under a number of small chiefs who ruled in their inaccessible areas but acknowledged British suzerainty.

Up to the year 1905, there were 17 tributary States of Orissa, namely, Athgarh, Athmalik, Boud, Baramba, Dasapalla, Dhenkanal, Hindols, Khandpara, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Narsinghpur, Naragarh, Nilgiri, Pallahera, Talchar, Tigiria and Ranpur. On 16th October 1905, the states of Patna, Kalahandi, Sonpur, Bamra and Rairakhol were transferred from the political control of the Administration of the Central Provinces to that of the Government of Bengal and placed under the control of the Commissioner of Orissa. Further, in October 1905, the States of Gangpur and Bonai were transferred from the Chota Nagpur Division to the Orissa Division. In 1922 the States of Saraikella and Kharasawan which were hitherto with the then Chota Nagpur were transferred to the Orissa Division Thus the States included in the Orissa Division were 26 in number.

The years 1938 and 1939 were to witness an unprecedented movement of States' people. They launched agitations with the aim of removing maladministration and numerous other economic grievances. This widespread and intense popular revolt became known as the Praja Mandal Movement. Its main demands were to put an end to maladministration and economic exploitation of the people, and the granting of democratic rights to them.

Misrule and Misgovernment in the Princely States of Orissa

As the paramount power, the British claimed the right to super-

vise the internal government of the Princely States of Orissa. They interfered in the day-to-day administration in the lines indicated in the Sanads and Tributary States Manual. One motive of such interference was the British desire of the British to give the States modern administration so that their integration with the British India would be complete. In fact, modern means of communication and education entered into the Princely States of Orissa during the period after 1858.

In actual practice, the control exercised by the political agent over the affairs of the States was hesitant and insufficient. It was not commensurate with the best interest of the people. This was because of the fact that the government was keen to secure the co-operation of the Rajas in order to maintain their rule in the face of the increasing opposition of the people in the British territory.

The Rajas, by and large, ruled their territory pretty much according to their own idea of what was right. The judicial cases were tried according to their whims and caprices. Taxation was heavy and unbearable. There was no civil liberty of people. Works of public utility were almost completely neglected. Princely States of Orissa were lamentably backward politically, socially, economically and educationally. Though these states were rich in natural resources, their Rulers seldom tried to exploit these resources for the benefit of their people. On the other hand, they continued to exploit them. While the people were suffering from starvation and disease, they spent lavishly on enjoying life.

A few Rulers, however, introduced some reforms for the betterment of their people. They encouraged the spread of education, literary activities and communication links. Most prominent among them was Maharaja Ramachandra Bhanja of Mayurbhanja. As early as 1912 he had the farsight to introduce the cabinet form of government and legislature.

In a majority of cases the situation was sad and depressing. The vagaries of despotic rule, the nature and extent of exploitation, and the consequent miseries and privations of the people were highlighted by the Enquiry Committee Report, Orissa States, 1939. The Committee found out that except in two States, Mayurbhanja and Bolangir, administration in the

other states was hopelessly bad.[1]

Influences from British administered areas made a slow but gradual penetration into the States, which were otherwise inaccessible and inhospitable regions. The people of the States were slowly but steadily awakened to the importance of organising themselves for ending their miseries and oppression.

In 1920, for the first time, the Congress meeting for the annual session at Nagpur called on the Princes to grant at once full responsible government in their States. Generally, Congress felt that political activities in each State should be organised and controlled by local Praja Mandal or State's People's Conference.

The British government formed a purely consultative body of the Princes called the Chamber of Princes which was to standardise the relationship between the States and Central governments. In response to this move of the government, All India States' People's Conference was founded in December 1927. Its aim was to influence the governments of the States "to initiate the necessary reforms in the administration by the force of collective opinion of the people of the States and to emphasize popular representation and self government by the elective principle in all States".

In such circumstances, the Orissa States' People's Conference was first convened in 1931 at Cuttack with the active cooperation of the All India States' People's Conference and under the active guidance of some public spirited persons of Orissa named Radhanath Rath, Balukeswar Acharya, Madhusudan Patnaik and Govinda Chandra Mishra. The conference was presided over by Bhubananand Das, an eminent legislator of Orissa. Its main objective was to champion the cause of the people in the States.[2]

The cooperation of the chiefs was sought but they refused to recognise it. On the contrary, all possible efforts were mede by them to suppress it. Extraordinary circumstances owing to the salt Satyagraha diverted the attention of its leaders from it. After its first conference, the organisation became dormant for a long time.

It was in the year 1936-37, that serious efforts were made by Sarangadhar Das and others to rejuvenate it. The second session of the Orissa States, People's Conference was held at Cuttack on 23rd June 1937 under the presidency of the eminent Congress leader Dr. B. Pattabhai Sitaramaya. It condemned the tyrannical behaviour of

most of the Kings, and exposed the real, exploitative character of the feudatory administration. It demanded a radical change in the existing pattern of taxation and administration in the States. "The Conference declared that its main objective was the attainment of responsible government by the people of the States. It was announced that all bonafide residents of the Orissa States above the age of 18 who subscribed to this aim of the conference were eligible for membership.

The Orissa States' People's Conference popularised among the States' People the ideas of democracy and civil liberty. It created political awakening among them and inspired them to work actively to secure their legitimate rights and basic privileges. The second non-cooperation movement produced a deep impact on the minds of the people of the States and stirred them into political activities. The situation becomes more favourable to their cause, when a popular government was established in the neighbouring province after the general election of 1937. The people in the States felt distressed to see that there was not the slightest suggestion of introducing rule of law and democratic government in these princely States, although the bordering region had a representative government under the 1935 Act.[3]

The extensive enquiry by the Mahatab's Committee and the publication of the contents of the report in 1939 had also profound impact on the people of the States. The committee's report revealed that except in two States, Mayurbhanj and Bolangir, administration in the other states was most primitive and in many states continuous oppression "had made the people morally degraded to an extent which could not be imagined in any civilized society". The committee came to the conclusion that it was impracticable to introduce any kind of democrary in these small and politically backward States. In their opinion, the only solution for relieving people from oppression and moral degradation was to cancel the sanads of suzerainties granted to the Rulers and merge the territories in the neighbouring provice of Orissa. Such revelations made most people in the States feel the necessity of fighting against their despotic and tyrannical rulers with a view to improving their condition.[4]

Meanwhile the Congress party mobilised the peasants of different districts to rise against the oppression by Zamindars. On 1st

September 1937 there was a big demonstration of a large number of peasants at Cuttack. The increased intensity of the agrarian against had deep impact on the neighbouring States like Nilagiri, Dhenkanal, Talcher, Nayagarh and Ranapur.

Praja Mandal Movement

The militant mass struggle directed against reactionary Princes of the Orissa States began when 'Praja Mandals' or People's Associations were formed there in 1938. The people in most States rose in revolt, demanding civil liberty for them.

The Nilgiri Praja Mandal was first formed. It offered nonviolent resistance to the royal authority under the leadership of Kailash Chandra Mohanty and Banamali Das. The Satyagraha went on for months together. The Chiefs of Nilagiri resorted to ruthless oppression to put down the spread of agitation. Hundreds were put in prison; there were lathi-charges and even firing was resorted to. The Praja Mandal made an emphatic protest against the repressive measures adopted by the government. A slight lull was caused when Nilagiri Dûrbar accepted the mediation of an eminent Congress leader, H. K. Mahatab of Balasore. The Praja Mandal was appeased by conceding certain demands of the people and by recognising it as a representative body of the great majority of the people of Nilagiri to put forth their grievances in a constitutional manner.

By July 1939 popular agitations had started in the States of Talcher and Dhenkanal. The struggle against the Rulers of Talcher was led by Prabitra Mohan Pradhan, a prominent Praja Mandal leader, while Naba Krishna Choudhury resigned his seat in the Orissa Legislative Assembly to give leadership to the people of Dhenkanal fighting against their oppressive Ruler. Both the Roulers tried to suppress the popular agitations with the use of force. However, with the mediation of the Political Department, a compromise was reached between the two sides as a result of which some political concessions were granted to the people.[5]

Meanwhile, Praja Mandals come into being in most of the Princely States. Thousands of people offered peaceful civil resistance in the States like Athgarh, Tigiria, Baramba, Narsingh-

pur, Naragarh, Bonai, Pal Lahara, Ranpur, Hindol and Keonjhar under the guidence of the leaders of the respective Praja Mandals. The rulers' reply to Satyagraha was the same as before—an effort to crush it through ruthless repression including lathi charges and firing on unarmed crowds of men and women. A large number of Satyagrahis were imprisoned. The Praja Mandals were declared illegal. The situation was extremely tense. This agitation took a different turn when the political Agent, Major Bazalgatte, was beaten to death by an angry mob at Ranapur on 3rd January 1939. Two peasant leaders, Raghunath Mohanty and Dibakar Parida, were later hanged and many others given punishment of varying years of imprisonment. The government immediately sent troops to control the situation and took several steps to prevent violent occurrences in other states. The Congress leaders including Gandhiji nid not like the Ranapur incident and advised the people not to repeat it elsewhere.[6]

Due to the agitations by Praja Mandals, a few Rulers such as, those of Hindol and Dhenkanal, introduced same Reforms, but these were not enough to calm the discontented mass. The latter again rose in revolt when the Congress party launched the Quit India Movement in August 1942. They believed that unless they intensified their agitation, they would not be granted real concessions.

In Dhenkanal, Baishnab Charan Patnaik and seventeen others brought some area (now Kamakhyanagar) under their control and carried on popular administration for about two weeks. The repressive measures adopted by the chief resulted in the reoccupation of the area by him.

Talcher was plunged in massive upheaval. Pabitra Mohen Pradhan, the most prominent leader, escaped from jail and took command of the popular movement. It was decided to capture the palace of the Ruler of Talcher town. On 7th September 1942 the people with their crude weapons like bows and arrows, etc. assembled in thousands near the palace to launch an attack upon it. The Ruler decide to terrorise them into complete submission. With the help of the British military force, he took recourse to aerial bombing and machine-gunning to disperse the crowd. The people had to retreat with some casualties. The authority succeded in re-establishing control over the whole of the State.[7]

Merger of the Orissa States

During the war period (1939-1942) there occurred a lull in the States. The attention of the people was diverted towards the future of the war as well as the political future of the country. The Congress people began to smell the dawn of Indepedence. But they did not slacken their pressure. For the time being the question of the merger of States receded to the background.

Harekrishna Mahtab took up the matter with Sir Stafford Cripps when he came to India in 1942. The political Department, however, agreed that this was the only feasible solution of the problem but did nothing about it.

As independence neared, the hopes and ambitions of the people in the States, and fears aad apprehensions of their Rulers grew in intensity. The Rulers tried hand to get together and form Unions to maintain their sovereignty while the people in the States demanded representative governments under the leadership of Praja Mandals.

The Cabinet Mission came to India in April 1946 to discuss the transfer of power with the political leaders of India. H. K. Mahatab, as the Chief Minister of Orissa, placed before them the problems of States and pleaded for their merger with the neighbouring province. He placed before the Mission a specially prepared map showing how the districts of Orissa were islands in an ocean of States which were protected by the British for their own purpose. Although the Cabinet Mission was deeply impressed by his arguments, it felt that it was not in a position to correct the mistakes which had been committed in the past.[8]

When India became independent, the British departed from the States. Mahtab convinced Gandhi and Patel of the soundness of his scheme of merger of the States and suggested to Patel in November 1947 that he should get the process in motion in Orissa.

A dangerous situation arose when some States joined together and formed an independent union of their own known as Eastern States Union consisting of the Orissa States and the Chhatisgarh States in the Madhya Pradesh. The Union was constituted with a president and his cabinet and Prime Minister. It raised also a few battalions of armed police to control popular agitation wherever it would be started. This showed how the Rulers of

Orissa States were trying to evade the inevitable issue of the merger of the states. The political Department seemed to have support for them.

with the connivance of the political Department, the Rulers allegedly instigated their tribal subjects to rise against Praja Mandal people. Some criminal elements among these tribals used violence against caste people, especially those associated with Praja Mandals. This is what happened in the State of Nilagiri which was afflicted by a lot of violence, anarchy and the paralysis of administration.

The Orissa Government came to the rescue of the people of Nilagiri. A battalion of Orissa Military Police marched into the State of Nilagiri under the leadership of N. Senapati, I. C. S., on 14th November 1947 in the midst of warm and enthusiastic welcome of thousands of people on the way. The Ruler of Nilagiri was forced to handover his administration to the Orissa government as he was not able to control lawlessness. This was really the beginning of the merger of the States of Orissa Nilagiri was then administered as an occupied territory by the Orissa government till 1st January 1948 when the occupation was legalised as a result of merger.

Thereafter the Orissa government insisted upon complete merger of States. The premier of Orissa discussed the whole situation with Sardar Patel and told him that Nilagiri had shown the way. Patel came to Cuttack on 13th December 1947 to settle the matter as he thought proper. There was huge demonstration on the entire way of about 20 miles from Bhubaneswar Air Port to Cuttack, demanding the merger of States. After some discussion, he made up his mind and gave his decision that these States should be amalgamated with the province of Orissa.

On 14th December 1947, Sarder Patel met the Rulers in a Conference in the Raj Bhawan at Cuttack at 9.00 A.M. Firstly, he explained firmly that the States should merge in the Province in the interest of the Rulers as well as the people. It was the young Raja of Ranpur who stood up and said that "Rulers must consult their people". At this Sardar got irritated and gave vent to his annoyance saying that the Rulers had not the cheek to talk of their people from whose hands their lives had so far been

protected by the government of India, and in future the government of India was not going to provide that protection.[9]

Although all the other States agreed to amalgamate with the province, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanja contended that he had granted responsible government to his people and therefore he could not do anything without consulting his government. Since Mayurbhanja was a tribal state, Sardar Patel left it to time. On 15th December 1947, the merger agreement was signed by the Rulers of Orissa States except Mayurbhanja. Accordingly 24 states were integrated to the province of Orissa on 1st January 1948.

It so happened that in course of year, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanja got disgusted with his own government and wanted to hand over the state to the government of India in the interest of better administration. But, to honour his words, he did not put pressure on his ministers. Ultimately, Sardar Patel sent for the Prime Ministers of Mayurbhanja and the others and got their agreement to the proposal of the merger of the State. The government of India took over the administration of Mayurbhanja and then it was merged in the province of Orissa on 1st January 1949.[10]

The fact that the merger took placé in the wake of Independence suggests that the Freedom Struggle was the main source of inspiration for the Praja Mandal Movement. Further, there was a lot of interaction between these two movement. In fact, many prominent leaders of the Praja Mandal Movement were also the leading elements of Orissa Congress. The merger movement could become a success not only because it had very capable leaders, but also the vast mass of the oppressed people came forward with zeal and determination to fight for their cause.

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4

POLITICAL FACTORS IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF ORISSA

B. N. Das
N. B. Pradhan

Introduction

Before we discuss the problem it is necessory to recount a few known truths regarding economic development which is taken as a secular and sustained rise in per capita productivity. In other words there is a continuous rise in per capita real income. This is possible on account of a number of factors. Capital accumulation, human capital formation, invention and innovation, labour supply, social and legal institutions and religious and cultural traits of people affect the process of growth in a wide variety of ways. Growth theorists are now unanimous in contending that economic development is a social phenomenon with social, political and other aspects all interacting in partly known and greatly mysterious and wired ways. Further growth and development is based on a long-term perspective with greater emphasis on the enlargement of productive capacity than on the full utilisation of the existing capacity.

I

The Problem

That political factors do play a role in the development process is not disputed. It is also accepted that such factors cut both ways. They enervate or fostor; they can cause or effect growth. The strength of political factors as causes or the magnitude of political changes following or accompanying the development process are, however hard to determine. There will always be some error of judgement. Here we try to take

political factors as casual agents which either bring in or impede growth and development. Orissa is a political unit in the Indian Union. Both the Central government of India and the regional government of the state of Orissa have been responsible for the development of the state.

II

Economic Transformation of Orissa

On the eye of the plan era around 1950, the state was an agrarian economy with 39 towns most of which were 'really large villages'. 72% of the labour force was engaged in agriculture; only 8.6% of it got absorbed in mining and manufacturing. Colleges were a few and schools not many in number. Engineering, agricultural and veterinary colleges were conspicuously absent. General literary rate was 15.8% which was below the national average. Per capita income of the state at current prices was Rs. 188 as against the nation's Rs. 274. At that time people of Orissa had the lowest per capita monthly consumption[3] of Rs. 15.02 when the national average was Rs. 27.81. The Punjab enjoyed a level of Rs. 31.96. On the whole the Orissan economy then was backward, stagnant; lopsided and undiversified.

From 1951 till the date the state government implemented six five year plans, changes, big and small, have been introduced in agriculture, industry, transport and communication, education and health. There have been radical land reforms, tribal sub-plans, minimum needs and 20-point programmes urban and rural development projects. Attention is given to myriad aspects of social and economic life ranging from community development to sports, from youth services to family welfare, from housing to nutrition, from powers generation to village industries and from production to public distribution of essential goods. All these resulted in a growth performance depicted in Table-1.

Rise in per capita and state income have not been high. They are unsteady and fluctuating. The compound annual growth rate of state income was 2.8% in the first plan, 0.7% in the second

Table-1. Selected Indicators of Development of Orissa

Serial No.	Period	Total outlay (Rs. crores)	% of Central assistance	Annual compound growth rate of state per capita income	State Income %	National Income %
1.	First Plan	18.42	54.7	0.9	2.8	3.6
2.	Second Plan	86.59	73.4	1.6	0.7	4.0
3.	Third Plan	22.60	46.7	1.8	4.5	2.2
4.	Fourth Plan	249.95	62.1	2.0	4.1	3.4
5.	Fifth Plan	453.62	52.1	1.0	2.9	5.1
6.	Sixth Plan	1580.45	49.1	—	—	- -

Notes: 3 annual plans 1966-67—1968-69 Rolling Plan of 2 years 1978-79—1979-80 are excluded.

Sources: Seventh Plan Orissa, Vol. I.

plan and so on. The rate of rise in the per capita income is quite slow. Sectoral contributions of the state's economy is narrated in Table-2.

Agriculture and allied activities still dominate the economy. Industrialisation which is the very name of economic development remains a tardy process. Other sectors do not display any marked change.

Despite efforts, partly reflected in the outlay figures (Table-1), to bring about changes everywhere, success bas been moderate. Stagnation is broken, the economy has started transforming itself. In Rourkela, in Sunabeda, in Koraput, in Badbil, Cuttack

Table-2. Sectoral Distribution of Income
(in percent)

Periods Sector	Primary Sector	Secondary Sector	Territory Sector	Other Services
1st Plan	67.9	8.3	6.4	17.4
2nd Plan	61.3	14.3	7.8	16.6
3rd Plan	55.4	19.2	7.5	17.9
4th Plan	67.3	10.8	10.8	11.1
5th Plan	65.1	11.7	11.1	12.1

Source : Seventh Plan 1985-90, Draft Vol. 1, Government of Orissa, 1984. p. 7, Annexure IV.

and Bhubaneswar change and modernisation are eye-catching. Between 1951 and 1986 there is much if not enough progress. Failures also have been many[4]. Historic, geographic, climatic and demographic conditions have not been conducive.

III

Let us settle down to the heart of the matter. How far have political factors been responsible for helping and hindering the process of development ? Politicians as leaders, members of political parties or as wielders of power in government initiate and steer the course and tempo of change. It is not possible to delve deep into the complex question. We shall try to confine our

themes to the pereceptual level, policy making and policy implementing activites of politicians, government and governmental organisations and institutions.

Planning : a great Political Act

Economic development first occured in the Western Europe. It[5] was a slow, spontaneous and prolonge process. No government thought of it. In fact governmental sponsorship was occasional Japan's development which succeeded that of the west was unique. The government induced[6] its process and directed it, retaining, as in the west, privats initiative and enterprise. Then came the Soviet Union. Collective[7] ownership and command control by government characterised its path of development. India, long before it achieved its independence decided to resort to planning for curing its backwardness and poverty. To constitute a planning commission for the centre and planning boards at the level of the states are momentous poltical decisions. Again to decide on decentralised democratic planning in a federal set up mixing persuasion with control, inducement with direction backed, at times, by legal sanction is indicative of political judgement of high order. Today in India and Orissa we accept without question that devlopment is the outcome of conscious and organised effort on the part on the government. Dr. H. K. Mahatab and his colleagues played a key role in the formation of the state of Orissa and took[8] a firm stand during the time when princely states were merged. The decision to shift the state's capital from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar and the establishment of Hirakud dam against heavy odds were healthy steps. The indomtable Mr. Biju Patnaik and his cabinet colleagues were instrumental in establishing Paradeep Port, Regional Engineering College, Rourkela, Regional College of Education, Bhubaneswar and the Berhampur and Sambalpur Universities. Mr. R. N. Singh Deo aimed financial discipline and Sri Sadasiva Tripathy gave a clean administration. Mr. J. B. Patnaik, the present Chief Minister, has made a desperate bid to establish a thousand industries in a thousand days by spending a thousand crore of rupees. Admittedly all these went a long way to push the state forward.

At the same time it is to be noted the planning process initia-

ted more than three decades ago has not been raised to the desired level of sophistication and has not been extended to the grassroot level. Planning organisations at the state, district and block levels are still at the preparatory stage. Two instances will suffice to support this assertion. The Planning Commission of India instructed the state in the 50s, to organise the state planning boards so as to make it an effective and expert body. After insistence and persuasion the Government of Orissa intended to form a State Planning Machinery. Advertisement for posts of director, joint director, duupty director and other posts was put up 1980. The recruitment committee made selections but we understand that everything was abandoned. The proces of selection was transferred to the Orissa Service Commission. The Commission recommended name. Then mysteriously the whole thing came to a dead end. Till today we know that there is no director functioning, contemplated, in the advertisement. There are of course, indications that the government has revamped[9] the planning and coordination department to tackle the planning problem at the state, district and block levels. But the episode smacks of hesitation and prevarication on the part of the top politicians of the country. The other instance relates to some aspects of District Development Board. In a communication[10] to the Registrar, Berhampur University the government of Orissa in March 1982 appointed Professor of Economics, Berhampur as a member of sub-committee for manpower planning and employment genaration for fhe district of Ganjam. The sub-committee has not met since. The sloth and stupor associated with the lower echelons of the political and administrative unit account for gaps in the state planning process. The political counterpart has not adequately taken note of the imperatives of development.

Perceptual Insight into the Region's Economy

Direction, pattern and pace of development and planning activities associated with it are greatly influenced by what the politicians think about the nature of the Orissan economy. Nearly all, who have mattered in the state politics ever since the plans began, have had the belief that the state of Orissa is a gifted land where resources abound. It is described as[11]

paradise of planners", "nature's favourite",[12] "next to none of the major provinces of India",[13] "Virgin country with immense potential".[14] "a land of untold wealth of natural resources"[15] and as one that presents a picture of "paradox of poverty in plenty".[16]. "These are exaggerated pictures. Take a snapshot view of the resource position of Orissa. The major portion of land is covered by red soil which is of low to medium fertility. The most fertile black[17] soil is found in small patches. The area covered by the alluvial soil is chronically effected by flood and cyclone. Monsoon is erratic. Rainfall is inadequate in Phulbani and Kalahandi districts. The extensive forest cover contains sizeable waste and scrub lands. Distribution of forest is highly uneven. Because of inaccessible terrains, and absence of infrastructure, forest resources have not been and cannot be exploited. Some of our forest wealth is not of much of commercial[18] importance. In minerals and water resources the state is rich. It has also a long coastline that awaits exploitation The quality of human resources is reflected in poor[19] health, low skill, high illiteracy and large tribal population. Innovative entrepreneurship of the type of Sri Biju Pattanaik and Sri Bansidhar Panda is utterly lacking. Physical capital in the form of irrigation canals, railway lines, and power are insufficient. The state government has created cooperative institutions, corporation and financial institutions the working of most of which is not satisfactory. The government has mobilised resources by way of tax which is only 5.1% of the state domestic product. All these give an impression that the state is not resource rich; it is also not resource poor. But iteration of resource affluence by dignitaries and political mentors hides the twin aspects of the state of backwardness. The first is the abject poverty of the state described in 1646 as a "land of poverty, hunger and disease".[20] The epithets characterise the state of affairs now, albeit not in that rigour. The second aspect concerns the relative backwardness of the state. Graph 1 narrates the path of per capita income of Orissa and India between 1970-1982. India grows at the rate of 9 and Orissa at the rate of 7. With this divergence, Orissa cannot catch up with the rest of the country. True, the divergence was wider earlier and it has narrowed a bit. In the 50s Orissa and Bihar were

changing their places as the least backward states in the country. In 1982-83 Orissa ranks 13th with Assam, U. P, MP and Bihar trailing behind in respect of per capita income. It is heartening but it cannot sidetrack the basic issue. Per capita income of the Punjab is Rs. 1443 and that of Orissa is Rs. 564 in 1970-71 prices. The gap is wide and tends to widen. The relative backwardness of the state manifests itself in all spheres: industrialisation, representation of the state in the Central services, Indian politics, sports, science and technology etc. The document: "The post-war development plans in Orissa 1946 writes that "its (Orissa's) very existence is little known to the outside world".[21] Four decades after, we cannot boldly deny the statement.

A number of deleterious effects ensue when the political and administrative leaderships function under the misconception that the state is an extraordinarily gifted land. It induces a belief that the state can stride forward with ease. Development is a difficult process. Age old poverty can be removed only by sustained hard work, bold initiatives and secrifice on the part of all. During the first three plans and the three annual plans resource mobilisation through additional taxation was less than the target set[22]. Finance ministers spoke of taxes falling 'heavily' on people.[23] They wanted to spare[24] the common man and were haunted by the dangers of overtaxation[25]. They thought that there should be "no additional burden on the weaker sections of society". When scarce resources were a dire necessity of development, land revenue was abolished in 1967-68. When there was further scope of taxing the agricultural sector, repeal of land revenue flouted economic reasoning. The misconception also distorts the goal formation at the state planning level. The state closely follows the guidelines of the national plans in promoting growth, justice, regional balance etc. That the state needs a breakthrough in order to overcome the slough of special backwardness is only slimly realised and not reflected in endeavour. When industrialisation is the crying need, in all the plans, allocation[26] to agriculture received top priority. When manpower planning should have been the strategy all through, human resource development received only scant attention. As goal setters and strategists, political parties as well as their leaders and top administrators have not acquitted themselves creditably

well.

Stability of Government and Political Climate

Among the important preconditions of economic development, one is a stable government which ensures continuity while introducing fundamental reform. The Table-3 records the length of ministries which have had an opportunity for shaping development strategies of the state.

No single cabinet lasted for longer than five years except the ministry of Sri J. B. Patnaik which enters upon its seventh year now. Personal[27] intrigues, group rivalry and infighting characterised the politics of Orissa. Confrontation among political parties, chisms inside the parties, parsonal ambitions and ministry toppling in order to aggrandise power kept the leaders and their followers occupied. Overall development of Orissa have suffered not a whit for all these.

A more harrowing tale is the alienation of the leaders from the masses of people whose support is so very essential for implementation of development programmes. Charges of 'corruption, misrule nepotism and improprieties' were levelled against many of our prominent leaders in whom people had reposed faith. Commissions of enquiry established that they were 'guilty of accepting illegal gratification, impropriety and abuse of power,'[28] "Causing substantial loss to the government of Orissa."[29] It is a queer quirk of fate and providence that some of the architects of Orissa shattered its hopes. There is disillusionment and disbelief everywhere. Dishonesty has percolated to the base. Quick money, grease money and speed money misallocate resources, reduce quality of performance and slow down the development process.

Plan Implementation

The State administration is hierarchical. At the apex is the governor—the symbolic head. The council of ministers with the Chief Minister at its head, administer the state and implement programmes through administrative departments at the secretariat and directorate levels. The Chief secretary co-ordinates the works

Table-3. Tenure of Ministries in Orissa

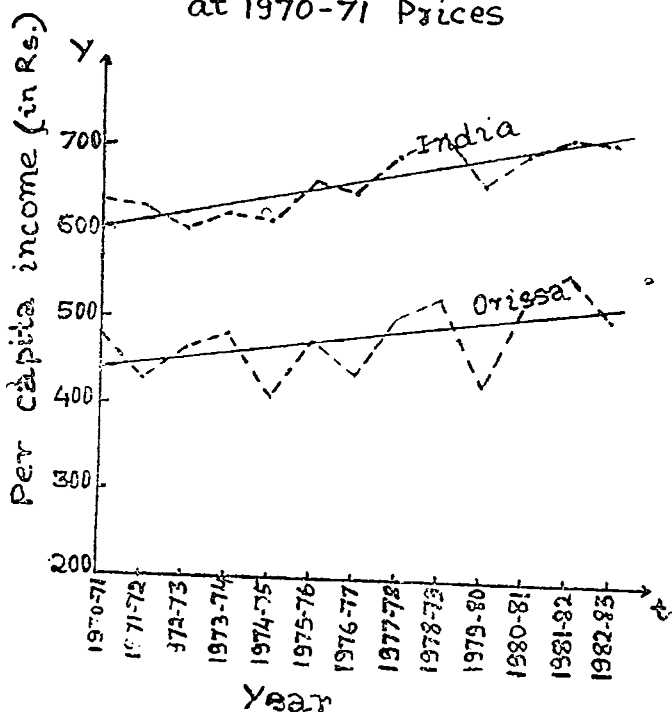
Name of the Chief Ministers	Period		Tenure in Years
	From	To	
H. K. Mahatab	Aug. 1947	May 1950	2 3/4
N. K. Choudhury	May 1950	Oct. 1956	5 5/12 (2+3 5/12)
H. K. Mahatab	Oct. 1956	May 1959	2 7/12
H. K. Mahatab* (With Ganatantra Parishad)	May 1959	Feb. 1961	1 3/4
President's Rule	Feb. 1961	June 1961	1/3
Biju Patnaik	June 1961	Oct. 1963	2 1/4
Biren Mitra	Oct. 1963	Feb. 1965	1 5/12
Sadasiv Tripathy	Feb. 1965	March 1967	2
R. N. Singhdeo	March 1967	Jan. 1971	3 5/6
President's Rule	Jan. 1971	Aprfl 1971	1/4
Biswanath Das	April 1971	June 1972	1 1/4
Nandini Satapathy	June 1972	March 1973	1 11/12
President's Rule	March 1973	March 1974	1
Nandini Satapathy	March 1974	Dec. 1976	2 5/6
President's Rule	Dec. 1976	Dec. 1976	13 days
B. Acharya	Dec. 1976	April 1977	1/3
Nilamani Routray	June 1977	1980	3
Janaki B. Patnaik	1980	1986	6

Source : H. R. Khanna, Report of the Commission of Enquiry.

Home Department, Government of Orissa, 1969, pp. 3-4. Sarjoo Prasad, Report of the Orissa Enquiry Commission, 1971-72, Home Department, Government of Orissa 1972, P. 2. B. C. Das, Government and Politics since Independence—A bird's eye view, Indian Political Review Vol. XII, July 1978, No. 2 pp. 165-174.

of all the departments. Prior to independance, the district administration was concerned with law and order and collection of land revenue. With the advent of plans it looks after implementation of plans through blocks. The district Collector is the co-ordinator and implementor of development administration. At the local level we have the local and the urdan local bodies with their welfare activities. During the imperial adminstration the pyramidal structure worked well. Orders were issued by the highest authority; they descended to the bottom and were

TREND OF PER CAPITA INCOME OF ORISSA AND INDIA during 1970-71 to 1982-83 at 1970-71 Prices



Least squares estimates of trend lines:

ORISSA: $\hat{Y}_o = 423.39 + 7.24t$

INDIA: $\hat{Y}_I = 598.34 + 9.06t$

executed as a matter of routine obedience without grumble and without question. Compliance reports which moved up to the top were submitted. But with the coming of democracy, freedom of expression, assertion and vindication of group interests, the structure has broken down. The assembly, the Panchayat samities, the Gram-Panchayats as the counterparts of administrative units interact with the latter in intimate ways. There are instances in Orissa when the political and administrative wings of the state governments have joined[30] their hands to frustrate societal goals. Self-seeking politicians, unscrupulous administrators with secret dealings under cover of secrecy or independently of each other robbed the state exchequer of resources[31] which could have been used for the good of the common man. Another aspect of state administration which accounts for slow implementation of programmes relates to the lack of rapport between the politicians and the bureaucrats. It has been broadly vented in private circles that the politicians have been half-educated or ill educated, they were upstarts during their school and college days. They did not pay respect to laws and regulations and induced the administrators to dilute standards and efficiency. The civil servants and technocrats on the other hand, are well educated, and trained; they have long years of experience and they are experts. They have reasonable pride in their abilities and mental acquisitions. They are the respectors of laws. Consequently there is a subterranean misunderstanding between the two groups. The politician tends to dictate and boss over the bureaucracy and the latter surreptitiously dithers and dodge. Both the groups have taken far too long a time to understand and cooperate with each other for the development of the state.

Implementing programmes need[33] political support as well as administrative efficiency. Politicians and administrators both at local, district and state levels are to be committed to plans. Politicians should create the right kind of atmosphere and facilities in the form of incentives and disincentives so that the bureaucracy can use initiative and discretion. In 1985 the state government announced various facilities to employees who stay and work in selected tribal blocks. After 3 years of work in tribal blocks the incumbents can be transferred to a place of their choice. They get extra monetary allowance. Doctors get preference in

selection for higher studies. This is a good political step.

The World and National Scenario

While examining the situation in Orissa, one cannot neglect thef forces which emanate from outside and influence the course oa events in it. The urge for development is world-wide. Indio much before its independence wanted to adopt planning td control, contain and banish poverty. After the Second World War, the desire to develop grew imperions in the third world countries. The U. N., World Bank and other international institutions, national governments of developed countries for economic, political and philanthropic reasons came forward to help the developing nations including India. Political leaders in the state were caught up in the web of mass economic development. In the name of economic development and social progress they ask for votes. They can go on enjoying power and prestige through promise and enkindlement of hopes. They use the help and patronage of the Government of India, the World Bank etc. for economic change in the state.

Final Remarks

1. The state of Orissa needs a big push for going ahead. It needs charismatic leaders. They should have bold initiatives; they must be committed to the cause and tenets of development planning. They should rouse and rally mass and administrative support for collective action. Political leadership is now the scarcest article for the state.

2. Not all is ill. The Khanna Commission of enquiry testifies that "there are, by and large, a considerable number of public men who have occupied high offices and whose image emerges untarnished and unscathed".[32] Vast numbers in the administration have not done and are not doing anything for their personal gain. The state can rely on them.

3. Political forces unleash popular enthusiasm, waves of collective movements. They rouse and spread consciousness. Most of the time their exhortations are symbolic indicating drive and direction. Mass tensions in Orissa were used to topple

governments, replace parties in power, and crush freedom of the press. Rarely have we seen a situation in which mass support was used for public weal.

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5

POLITICS OF REGIONALISM IN ORISSA

Surendra Nath Dwivedy

In the recorded history of Orissa, there are very few instances of fight amongst different regional groups or communities struggling for power or supremacy. Ethnological studies do not indicate any hostile divisions or rivalries. Social and caste divisions and differences were or are no better or worse than what prevails in other parts of the country. Being a Hindu feudal area, there was hardly any scope for other religious communities building up a strong base. Whatever they are or were, are very insignificant in number and went along very well with the dominant community. In their dress, customs, habits and general demeanour, one can hardly distinguish one Oriya from the other. Religious minorities such as Muslims in Orissa find Urdu a more difficult language for study than Oriya and they bear such names as 'Gurubari Khan', and 'Hadu Mian'. There has been no complaint or agitation for lack of provision for learning 'Urdu' from any quarter. Linguistic conflict was never nor likely to be ever a problem in the state. It is one of the dominant Hindu states, and a compact one-language state. The following data gives an idea about language groups :

Oriya –	18457958	HO –	213871
Telugu –	499425	Kondh –	195006
Santhali –	370006	Hindi –	1938067
Kui –	350303	Sabar –	157801
Bengali –	331237	Mundari –	117662
Urdu –	686541	Others –	770937

Culturally, the State is fortunate for being under the influence of Lord Jagannath which symbolises universal brotherhood. Unlike other Gods and Goddesses which are either awe-inspiring or dreadful deities, Lord Jagannath is a deity of the poor and the downtrodden and thus is worshipped almost in every hamlet.

Barring a small percentage, this deity is almost a household God even in Tribal and Harijan families, if, of late, some percentage of this population has fallen under the influence of Christian Missionaries and their integration with other sections of the population becomes difficult, it is nothing but a case of neglect and indifference on the part of society's leadership. By and large, the entire state is tied with one cultural bond and outlook quite distinct from religion.

Even the British Government had accepted this homogeneity. When in 1933, the White Paper announced the formation of two new provinces, as these were being named during the British regime Sind was created as a Muslim province and to strike a balance, Orissa was constituted as a Hindu dominated region. Except some stray incidents, most local, there has not occurred any serious communal or clan confict in Orissa. From the administrative point of view, Orissa is one of the few regions which is taken as a peaceful state, and from the inception of the state, till today no serious internal riot or regional revolt has taken place which has caused great worry to the local as well as the central administration, and neither has the aid of a sustained military force become necessary to quell such happenings. Of course, during the Quit India Movement 1942, not only was the military called out, but air-bombing was also used to quell popular uprising in Talchar and Jajpur. But that is a different story altogether.

Politically Orissa has not enjoyed this unity and amity. The policy of 'divide and rule' followed by the British regime in the country unfolded its ugly features in the formation of the new state of Orissa and it sowed the seeds of dissension. The White Paper announcement was materialised in 1936 under the Government of India Act of 1935 when Orissa became a separate administrative unit—a province. Only a small fraction of the Oriya-speaking tracts were amalgamated into one separate provincial administrative unit consisting of six districts such as Balasore, Cuttack, Puri, Ganjam, Koraput, Angul and Sambalpur.

Oriyas have a hoary past—full of glory and valour. Its cultural heritage spreads over a wide region of this country and also in South East Asia where, in some parts it is still preserved and honoured. Its political influence extended far beyond the

present boundary of the state. "Kalinga Empire" and "Samrat Kharabel" are names which are adored and admired even now. The great Oriya race is proud of its heritage which is reflective of its ancient civilization.

The conquest and subjugation of Orissa by the Britishers were made in bits and from different directions and at different periods of time. It might not have taken a very long time for the Britishers to capture, but it was not as smooth as historians would like to paint it. The resistance put up by the 'Paiks' of Khurda, Bir Surendra Sai of Sambalpur and 'Fituri of Sitaram Raju in Koraput are landmarks in the history of Orissa.

The southern parts of the state came under the British spell first. The coastal districts as well as Sambalpur were under the Mahratta rule. This was conquerred in 1803—almost the last in India to come under complete control of the Britishers. It is said that real administrative control of Sambalpur and adjoining areas in the then 'Central Provinces came into the hands of the Britishers only in 1818. This history of conquest inevitably did not foster growth of one administration and integration. In the beginning of British rule, therefore, Orissa was put under three different administrations—South under Madras, Eastern areas under Bengal presidency and the West under the control of different administrations after the death of Mukund Dev and had lost its independence.

Hence the existing national divisions such as east, west and south have their origin in the occupation of Orissa by the Britishers. Administrative units being different, new loyalties and interests developed and link between these areas and people was somewhat snapped. This continued for centuries and as a consequence there was little inter-mingling, with the people of the respective administrative units, trade, commerce and education relationship became different and the impact of all this mixture is easily discernible even now. Oriyas in the south and west developed a dialect of their own which is in emphasis and accent different from others. Further these areas became part and parcel of the respective provincial administrations and administratively they were tail-ends of the province—at a distant place away from the provincial capital. It neither received attention nor adequate share of the development programmes.

It can be safely stated these tail-ends remained neglected and backward; communication, transport and educational facilities were much less there was no infra-structural build-up for future growth and development. This backwardness varied in these 3 administrative regions. Of course, some Oriyas, were elected to the legislative bodies of the respective provinces and boldly focussed their grievances, difficulties and sad state of affairs. The problems were focussed, but they received no publicity and were not highlighted in a manner that would create and influence public opinion. In this sphere, the eastern region was somewhat better placed. Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts constituted a major portion; the population was thicker; they received comparatively better educational facilities. These districts administratively became one Division under a Commissioner and the province after its separation from Bengal in 1911 was known as Bihar and Orissa. These districts, under this new identity, were almost recognised as the heartland of Orissa. Although this part of Orissa was the same tail-end and economically remained as backward as the two other regions, in view of its population and size, it was in an advantageous position. Its representation in the Bihar legislature was large in number and leading personalities like Pandit Gopabandhu Das, Pandit Godavarish Mishra became its members and 2 other prominent figures Late M. S. Das and R. N. Bhanjadeo occupied ministerial offices. In the Central Assembly also people belonging to this part of Orissa became members, notable among them being Pandit Nilakanth Das and Bhubanand Das. These personalities were virtually leaders of the Oriyas and all of them hailed from Eastern Oriyas. Educational facilities including college education were much better in the eastern region. Most probably so far as illiteracy is concerned, all the three regions were placed in the same category, but a large number of people got higher education in this area. Because of this advantage, whenever any employment opportunities were opened, people from the eastern region dominated. In subsequent years, this disparity and gap became wider and both west and south regions developed a sense of being discriminated against and neglected. This historical development could not be checked under the circumstances; the leaders of the eastern region were hardly

responsible for this state of affairs. The real masters and policy makers were the Britishers. All the same this gave scope to regional interests to mobilise themselves. It persisted in a low key especially in the western part as Sambalpur had no contiguous geographical link with the heartland and it had much less social contact than the southern area. Princely states intervened and they became a barrier for the development of more closer relationship between different regions of Orissa. Not much harm would have been done if this had remained confined to a certain limited sphere—the percentage of employable people not being much it could have been contained without much difficulty, but the British administration was hardly interested in tackling such emotional issues.

It seems during this period and much earlier to the formation of the new Orissa State in 1936, survey and settlement operations were carried on in the western region along with other areas. But these operations were conducted by people specially 'Amins' who came into direct contact with the ordinary simple village folks. Here again, the people of the eastern region dominated in such spheres as more trained personnel to carry out such activities were available from that region. These people exploited the ordinary villagers to the maximum; corruption was rampant and the former indulged in such activities on a large scale thus creating a sense of hatred not only for themselves, but for the whole of the region. Any Oriya excepting those who utter their dialect was named as "Katikis", i. e. a set of exploiters for whom people have no love or sympathy. "Katakis" meant all excepting those hailing from Sambalpur areas. They are not merely of the district of Cuttack. Slowly "this cancer of regionalism came" into play.

But thanks to political and other reasons, the capacity to create schisms and differences remained subdued. The division of the entire Oriya race and tagging them on into more than one province created a very unnatural situation. If this state of affairs had been allowed to stabilise, then in course of time Oriya language and culture would have been wiped out and Oriyas as a race would have been extinct. There are many instances of neglect, discrimination and deliberate effort to liquidate this community under the existing administrations. The writer can

narrate a personal experience. In 1911, Bihar and Orissa were separated from Bengal and it became one province. Orissa was being ruled by a Divisional Commissioner; Patna was the capital; Patna High Court had its circuit sittings a Cuttack. In many ways, there was greater and closer association with Bihar and the people of Bihar. Yet in the year 1930, when we were sent to Patna Camp Jail as political prisoners—some 500 of us—it took considerable time for us to impress upon the fellow Bihari prisoners that we have a separate language and what we speak, sing or write is not Bengali. They would hardly believe that we have a separate script. Such was the plight of Oriyas in almost all the provinces to which they were tagged. In the eyes of the people of other parts of India, Oriyas and Orissa were non-existant; they only knew Jagannath Puri. I think it was in the year 1938—that the Haripura session of the Indian National Congress, was held in Gujarat, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose presiding. Some of us, Oriya delegates in one morning went round the session premises singing an Oriya national song "Swadhin Bharat, Swadhin Bharat, Swadhin, Swadhin, Swadhin re". It was known to all that Subhas Babu was born in Orissa and in 1936, Orissa was constituted as a separate province. Yet people were surprised to hear our language, and they thronged in hundreds to see and hear us; but at the same time they were under the impression that we were Bengalis. Such was our fate. At every stage and almost at all levels including the highest, we had to fight our way. This position remains, more or less, in a different context even today. Any talk of regionalism when the entire race itself has to assert its identity and establish a position of equality and of status amongst different states in India, is nothing but blasphemous.

This digression apart, what is being emphasised is that Orissa's language and culture was in the process of extinction after it remained divided under different administrations during the British rule. Patriotic Oriya leaders saw through this game quite early and under the great leadership of Late M. S. Das, the Oriya renaissance movement raised its head. The Utkal Sammilani was organised in 1903 and a systematic movement was launched not for a separate state at the begining, but for unification of all Oriya speaking people and revival and preservation of Oriya language

and culture. This movement was the sole political and, so to say, national platform of the Oriyas in which participated all sections and all classes of people irrespective of regions and administrations. Even the rulers of the princely states which were separate from the 'British' administrative areas presided over such conferences. Articulate sections of the Oriya-speaking population forgot their petty rivalries which were just at an embryonic stage on account of circumstantial situations and plunged into this new patriotic movement. The vitality of the Oriya language and culture asserted itself and Oriya society was rescued from the path of disintegration.

This movement started on a broader canvas and it created for itself a very congenial and cooperative atmosphere. It was, in the beginning, started with an emphasis and specific purpose of unification of Oriya-speaking tracts and preservation of Oriya language and culture. In order to avoid misunderstanding and the path of confrontation, one of its distinguished leaders, Pandit Gopabandhu Das, in his famous presidential speech made it absolutely clear that this movement was not parochial, and neither were its interests in conflict with broader Indian nationalism. It is one of the integral parts of the nation. He further clarified the position by saying that Orissans or Oriyas do not mean merely those who speak the language, but it includes all those who inhabit Orissa, irrespective of their religion and language. Another redeeming feature of this movement was that leaders of the west and south especially of the southern region took more initiative and active part in this movement as contiguous Oriya speaking areas were left in different administrations and they were in deadly earnest to get them back. This movement also spread into the outlying Oriya speaking tracts in Bihar, Bengal, Central Provinces and Madras and it had in its fold, all the 26 Oriya-speaking feudatory states that were kept apart and isolated from the British administered areas.

Trends of further disintegration of the Oriya society both from inside and outside were arrested when in 1919-21, Pandit Gopabandhu Das with his followers politically associated himself with the national mainstream and a branch of the Indian National Congress was formed. Utkal Sammilani did not become a part of the Indian National Congress nor did all the leaders of the

Sammilani agree with this political commitment of Pandit Gopabandhu Das. There where visible differences amongst the leaders of the Utkal Conference in their attitude and approach. Indian National Congress was leading a non-cooperation movement in the country and all leaders of the Utkal Conference were not in favour of a confrontation or clash with the then British administration. But it did not affect the functioning of the Utkal Conference which remained as a separate Independent Organisation and Pandit Gopabandhu Das had no difficulty in working in both. An additional advantage was that the Indian National Congress had accepted the principle of linguistic distribution of states and in its constitution, divided different regions on that basis and named them. Utkal found a place in that list. Utkal provincial Congress Committee extended its jurisdiction to the entire Oriya-speaking areas lying under adjacent administrations and representation was given to these areas in the Utkal provincial Congress Committee. A dispute over some areas was carried on between Bihar Congress, Andhra Congress and Utkal Congress for some years, yet these areas continued to be represented as delegates in the Indian Nation Congress through the Utkal Congrass Committee. Even till the year 1946, when I became the General Secretary of the Utkal Provincial Congress Commitee, Harihar Patnaik from Ichhapore in the south and Bijay Kumar Pani and friends from Chakradharpur in Singhbhum district of Bihar were not only members of the provincial congress committee, but some of them were elected to the A. I. C. C. from Utkal. Hence instead of the prospect of the Oriya movement being impaired, it was carried on an additional front and the problems were often focussed in the All India Congregations of the I. N. C. Since Congress party became the major political force and active politicians from all Oriya speaking areas participated in it, local and petty regional schisms almost vanished.

If it existed, it was in a subdued form in a different context in the political front. In the politics of Orissa, it was not mainifested; but Indian National Congress being the only big political forum then, there was often group rivalry and tussle for leadership inside the organisation and sometimes on such occasions, there was regional or local gang-up; but that was temporary and for a particular purpose. Here again, it had never assumed the

character of sponsoring the cause of a region or propping up of a leader of the region, but holding together behind personalities hailing from one region who might be contesting each other. When in the year 1931, preparations were afoot to hold the annual session of the Indian National Congress for the first time in Orissa at Puri in 1932, there was a big competition for the occupation of the prestigious office of the Chairmanship of the Reception Committee. Pandit Nilakanth Das and Shri Gopabandhu Choudhury were the probable names and both belonged to the eastern region. But Puri and the entire South so solidly supported Pandit Das that the combination of Cuttack and Balasore with some others could hardly be able to prevent Pandit Das from occupying the office. So far as I remember, Pandit Das was elected Chairman unanimously and the other two important office bearers being Gopabandhu Choudhury of Cuttack, General Secretary and Harekrishna Mahtab of Balasore as General Officer in charge of volunteers.

So in the first phase, from the inception of the Utkal Conference in 1903, for the quarter of a century, the overriding consideration was unification and integration. The conception of a province of Orissa was in a nebulous stage. When the main stream was out of existence, there was little point in searching or discovering a sense of regionalism in any part of Orissa, the parts themselves not being formed or stabilised. Actually speaking, demands for the formation of a province were put forward and Barrister M. S. Das's famous "Chhinnamata Utkal Janani" movement took shape during or just prior to the visit of the Simon Commission to India. Here also there were differences amongst the leadership in Orissa because the Indian National Congress had advocated boycott of the Commission. All the same Orissa's case for the constitution of a new province comprising of Oriya-speaking people living under different administrations were represented before the Simon Commission. The Commission faced adverse demonstrations all over the country, but the welcome and reception that it received from some Oriya-speaking population must have created a favourable impression. For the first time, they recommended a separate province for the Oriyas. This report most probably came out in 1928-29 and then a crucial phase in Orissa politics began.

This was the basis on which the formation a new province of

Orissa was undertaken. It was not based upon maintaining geographical contiguity nor unification of all Oriya-speaking tracts. As has been stated earlier, in order to strike a balance since the British Government created a Muslim state called Sind, they announced the separation of Orissa which was predominantly Hindu. This was purely a political decision. Secondly, this formulation not only kept the Oriya-speaking people divided, the princely states which came closer in course of the unifying movement were to be treated as sovereignties under the British crown along with the provincial autonomy conceded under the Government of India Act, 1935. Before the 2nd Round Table Conference, held in 1932 in London, subsequently in the Joint Parliamentary Committee deliberations and prior to that before the O' donnel Committee a strong plea was made for a stronger and fuller province of Orissa. All these efforts proved abortive and what was offered was a truncated administrative region consisting of some portions of Madras and Central Provinces in addition to what was already known as the Division of Orissa of the province of Bihar and Orissa. Apart from the areas that still remained in Bengal, Bihar, Central Provinces and Madras, more than 2/3rds of Orissa were kept administratively and politically cut off as small sovereign units under the direct charge of the Political Department of the Government of India, and hopes for its amalgamation were remote. Late Madhusudan Das shouted and urged for a fuller body with its head, which had been cut off to be brought back, but what the British Government offered was neither the head nor the body-frame, but tail-ends of three different administrations with no common link in between them.

So the new province of Orissa took birth on the 1st of April, 1936, "All Fool's day". There was a feeble attempt to prevent this. The Indian National Congress had announced non-cooperation and opposition to the Government of India Act, 1935 and its, so-called provincial autonomy. Some voice was raised in Orissa not to accept this proposal regarding Orissa. Apprehending danger, some moderate politicians like late Bhubanand Das and ex-feudal chiefs like Maharaja of Parlakhemindi who at one time represented Orissa in the Second Round Table Conference started building up public opinion and prepared the minds of the people emotionally in favour of acceptance of the British pro-

posals. I remember an occasion, at a public meeting at Cuttack, Late B. Das declared that the Congress in Orissa was in favour of acceptance and I, as a young lad sitting somewhere inside the crowd shouted "question", thereby indicating that what Das had said was not a fact. This created a flutter. Lest Das's motive was doubted and would be ill-taken by the Britishers and spoil their cause, he took considerable time to explain that although Congress had advocated non-acceptance, a large number of Congresssmen including himself in Orissa welcomed this and would work it out. Mine was a shrill voice raised spontaneously. It had no strength; neither any member of the younger generation, who most probably would have reacted like me, had raised any organised opposition. When later on, the political leadership of this great country, India, could compromise and agree to its vivisection despite the opposition of Gandhiji, it is no wonder that the truncated province of Orissa could come into being and be thrust upon the people. This injustice was undone, to a great extent, only after the integration of the so-called sovereign ex-princely states into Orissa but that happened only after Independence. We could restore these Oriya territories from tiny Gods set up by the Britishers, but areas that had remained in different administrations in neighbouring provinces could never be brought back even after Independence and inspite of the States Reorganisation Commission. This was a tragic development. Oriya society remained as divided as before, but they were given to swallow and share the leftovers and spoils of 3 different administrations. As is natural, a hungry and poverty stricken people would quarrel over the spoils which was never satisfying.

The province was formed and elections to a new Orissa State Assembly were held peacefully. The first ever Congress Party Government was formed in Orissa which was a three-member cabinet—all the three hailing from 3 regions: Bisawanath Das, Premier from south, Nityanand Kanungo, Minister from the east or central and Bodhram Dube, Minister, from the west. This was a good compromise and this ministry worked smoothly during its brief existence. But was it a formal acceptance of 3 different regions which had a notional existence ? The pour-parler that went behind the scene before the formation of this

cabinet and the various combinations and permutations that took place inside the Congress pary to get a majority support behind contesting leaders could not be said to have not aroused regional sentiments. Because this contest had nothing to do with policy or programme, suitability or otherwise of the individual person who would adorn the chair of Premiership, but a mere majority in number was the trump-card and if that could be achieved by playing regional sentiments or containiag them, it was a clever game. This, I imagine, to a large extent, was the forerunner of the politics in Orissa that was yet to manifest itself.

Further, the sixty-member assembly that was constituted under limited franchise at the time had representation from different sections including the Chamber of Commerce, Landlord and labour. But barring these few representations, the strength and composition was such that a solid combination of members belonging to east or central districts could appropriate to themselves all priyileges or would be in an advantageous position to discriminate and deprive the districts of the south and west if they had any evil design. Singly or in combination of south and west would hardly be able to combat this. But fortunately the Congress Party which had representation from all sides could hardly afford to indulge in such self-defeating manoeuvres and during this brief regime, political issues were so overwhelming that administratively nothing was done to accentuate or hurt regional sentiments. But regional politics was very much in vogue during this regime on the question of selection of a place for establishing the capital of the new province. There was open display of aggressive regionalism. Personally, I think, this first-ever entry of regionalism in Orissa politics aroused some bitterness and misunderstanding between different regions and made a section conscious of this. The tangle was resolved by the acceptance of majority formula evolved by a combination of the eastern and western sections and the Orissa Assembly passed a resolution selecting 'Cuttack-Chowdwar' site as its future capital instead of Rangailunda near Berhampur, Ganjam. It would have been ideal in such cases to arrive at a decision by a consensus, but a majority decision left its bad odours. The country was not yet free and political freedom struggle was on.

Whatever injustice has been done, it is by design of the Britishers. If after the formation of the new province, our politicians had maintained the momentum of the movement of unification of the Oriya-speaking regions into one administration, the people's mind would have been diverted. But they were more interested in collecting spoils of the new administration which gave rise to narrower instincts, and the unifying spirit dampened due to the slowing down of the Oriya movemant.

During the war, a coalition ministry under the Chief Ministership of the Maharaja of Parlakhemindi ruled for sometime. There was little opportunity for any other political movement under the severity of war restrictions and therefore the political life was dull and the administration was carried on in its traditional manner. But this ministry was able to establish a separate High Court and a University for Orissa which was a long-standing demand of the Oriyas. This somewhat fulfilled the aspirations of the educated people. Little did anyone imagine at the time that the establishment of such high centres of eduaction and judiciary of which every province feels proud, would become a bone of contention, and agitations on regional lines would raise their head in this state in later years thus becoming a breeding ground for the growth of regionalism in its worst form.

Orissa had a Congress ministry again after the war and prior to Independence. It was headed by Harekrushna Mahtab. The Quit India Movement had such a spell over the people that the Congress party won 46 seats out of 60 belonging to all regions; the Congress party was not dominated by any single region. The post-war cabinet had members from all the regions. With the prestige of the National Movement behind it, an era of consolidation, stability, unity and development was expected. But alas ! this remained a dream and a most virulent campaign of vilification and regionalism sprouted up during this post-war ministry in Orissa.

The proposal for a great earthern dam over Mahanadi, to control devastating floods and to divert the vast water-power for irrigation and energy-making was contemplated by the British Government and all necessary preliminaries, including its designs, plan project and provision of money had been done earlier. Even the site selection-Hirakud near Sambalpur—had been done before. What

was left for the new Government was to execute the work, first of its kind in Orissa. It was the first systematic effort to control high floods and this earthern dam is one of the largest in the whole of Asia. The construction of such a dam would certainly be a great event and its inauguration was done with great fanfare. This multipurpose project has a big reservoir and consequently evacuation of some villages was a necessity. This reservoir supplied water for power generation which is in Chipilima, some distance away from the Dam, but it also supplied water to the canal system that irrigates coastal areas after controlling high flood waters. This reservoir affected many villages and a sizable population. Apart from dislodging a number of villagers who were mostly agriculturists, it deprived many agriculturists of their very fertile and valuable agricultural lands. This land-owning class was mostly big 'Gountiyas' (a sort of landlords), the majority of whom were lawyers, upper middle-class and a rich influential section of the community. Their interests were immediately touched and they fought against such construction. A successful campaign was launched impressing upon the local people that their region was being deliberately submerged for the benefit of the coastal people who held the reigns of Government. To give zest to the movement, Shri Sradhakar Supakar, a member elected from the constituency to the Orissa Assembly, resigned. The entire Sambalpur which was then the only Western region-princely states were yet to be merged—rose in anger and was in flames. Not only the Government, but all 'Katakis'—non-Sambalpuris—became the target of attack and were potrayed as exploiters in the eyes of the local population. This tension, movement of hatred and opposition, continued for a considerable period. It left behind in the peoples' minds a lot of bitterness and misunderstanding and this was later on exploited by interested groups and politicians for their own advantage. In fact, with the commencement of the anti-Hirakud dam agitation, regionalism had its advent in Orissa politics.

This itself would have posed no great danger to the totality of Oriya society had it continued in that exclusive small pocket. Further, this movement remained confined amongst a section of vocal vested interests and the general masses got disinterested. But the bitterness that existed, got a fillip again after the merger

of the princely states into Orissa.

The merger of the states itself has a great history. It is no doubt true that such a merger was necessitated from all points of view, in the interest of the people of the ex-states, Orissa and the country as a whole. It also enabled the state of Orissa to become a viable and major state in the country and the initial disadvantage and frustration that the Oriya community was suffering from the days of the constitution of truncated province, were removed. Both in respect of the area and population of the province, there was a big leap, and great enthusiasm prevailed amongst the people.

But there was another factor which had to be recognised. The people's movement for merger was not strong in western 'Garjats' (ex-princely states) and as a result, the local rulers were not exposed or they gained unpopularity in the eyes of their people. These few ex-rulers belonging to this region did not take the merger kindly and had a grievance against the coastal leadership who were the performers of the merger episode.

Foremost amongst, them, R. N. Singh Deo, Maharaja of Bolangir-Patna, in a bid to prevent merger into Orissa, worked out a plan of separate and autonomous Eastern Regional Council. In this he had the support of his natural father, Raja of Saraikala, who not only helped him in this diabolical game, but later on betrayed the cause of the Oriyas by agreeing alongwith Raja of Kharasuan to opt for the province of Bihar. The loss of Sarai-Kala and Kharasuan to Bihar has many other reasons and some of our own leaders are equally to be blamed for this tragedy. But the fact remains that a very powerful section of the pincely states under the leadership of R. N. Singh Deo did all that was possible on their part to prevent integration of Orissa state into Orissa. This merger was celebrated and the new administration took over on 1st January, 1948.

In the meantime, the manner in which the new administration introduced rules and procedures as against the direct personal rule in the ex-states and the sudden changes that were made, did not become popular with the people. The autocracy was replaced by a bureaucracy which was wooden and impersonal. This apathy was fully exploited politically by the forces of anti-merger who become active.

These ex-rulers of the western region fully identified themselves with the regional feelings created on account of anti-Hirakud project movement and had a two-pronged strategy. One was to establish some link between the districts of Sundergarh, Sambalpur, Bolangir and Kalahandi with a view to organising a strong regional front and secondly a Koshal-Utkal Parishad was formed which advocated formation of 'Koshal'. Literatures were published and almost a regular process began to operate in social and cultural fields to make out that these areas were different from other areas and their interest could never be protected in the present administrative set-up. Such an evil-designed move, of course, did not succeed; neither could it receive adequate support in the regular district of Sambalpur whose leaders had fought equally for the formation of a separate province and also for unification of all Oriya-speaking areas. But it had a limited success in the sense that regional interest in a certain area which is subsequently known as Western Orissa was aroused.

Subsequent developments clearly show that regionalism in Orissa politics has come to stay. The formation of Ganatantra Parishad, as a political party, is an outcome of this development. Although article 3 of the constitution of the Ganatantra Parishad states that "the territorial jurisdiction of the G. P. extends to the whole of Bharat," in actual practice, when it was started, it confined its activities mostly within these areas and its office-bearers also, by and large, belonged to these districts including some ex-rulers of the princely states. It was the first emergence of a provincial party of Orissa with the avowed object of highlighting the "special problems" of Orissa and 'bettering the conditions of the people of Orissa". While taking great pains to explain that the Ganatantra Parishad is a broadbased democratic party, the General Secretary of the party in its third annual report observes "that all rights and even individual freedom were snatched away from the people of the ex-states by the Congress Government in Orissa and they were exploited in many other ways." The Orissa Government came upon them like conquerors. For more than a couple of years, the people of the ex-state areas fought against this repression collectively and otherwise. But it was felt that this fight would be intensive and effective if a regular organisation is set up to bring together all elements who are

fighting singly or by groups in isolation". He further states "so gradually, this idea gained ground; it took the shape of a political organisation and this organisation was named as Ganatantra Parishad". One of its main objects, as is stated in the above report, was to bring Orissa at par with the other states in India by trying to solve its multifarious special problems. This party later on extended its activities to other parts of Orissa and had amongst its office-bearers, persons belonging to other areas including the eastern and southern regions. This was an off-shoot of the regional movement and its main theme and thunder at the initial stage was to highlight the cause of the feudal vested interest, and the regional interests of the people of ex-states and Sambalpur districts do not remain in doubt.

It should be mentioned here that in the very first general elections under the Republican Constitution of 1950, the Ganatantra Parishad secured as many as 30 seats in the 140-house of Orissa Legislative Assembly and its leader became the recognised leader of the Opposition. It became the second most important political party in the state and in the subsequent elections, its strength further improved and ultimately it entered into a coalition with the Congress party and participated in the Coalition Ministry formed under the leadership of Harekrushna Mahtab in the year 1959. But later on it had to lose its provincial identity altogether to merge in the Swatantra Party founded by C. Rajgopalachari.

While discussing regionalism in Orissa politics, its influence and impact, one ought to take into consideration another characteristic feature in Orissa's political life. Never a call of regionalism or provincialism, or clan or caste interest or even appeal for a Jharkhand province has evoked enthusiastic or lasting response from the people of the state. Not only a sincere and democratic effort to sponsor a political party like the Ganatantra Parishad had to be given up in favour of an All India Party, similar efforts made by Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab and Biju Patnaik to sponsor parties such as Jan Congress, Utkal Congress. Pragati Party etc. have proved abortive. Even the call of a Jharkhand province and fighting elections on that basis by the Jharkhand party has a very limited appeal amongst large sections of the tribal population and that has gradually dwindled as a political force as in the last 4 elections to the Orissa Assembly, not a single member of the

Jharkhand party got elected. It does not mean that the Jharkhand party has no hold over the population and that it has lost all potentialities for the future. But as a political force influencing the election politics of the state, it can hardly make any dent. In the pre-British period, some feeble attempts were made to cater to some caste interests by sponsoring politically-oriented caste organisations, but it could not make any headway. Unlike some other states, Orissa is, by and large, somewhat free from the evils of parochialism, communalism, casteism and regionalism and at least these interests are unable to carve a place for themselves in the political life. There might be some temporary success at a given place to influence some elections here and there by catering to these interests, but that has no impact on the politics of the state. Orissa has all along fallen in line with the Central parties. Even 2 State Governments born out of coalition with and of provincial parties one under the leaderships of Singh Deo and the other under the leadership of Biswanath Das could not hold together for a full term. This only shows that Orissa is not a favourable ground for such politics. Let alone regionalism, even provincial appeal has not cut much ice. After the constitution of the new province and in the post-freedom period, barring the protest agitation against the unfair and unjust report of the States Reorganisation Commission in 1956 and the unity and solidarity that was witnessed all over the state on the question of establishment of a second Steel Plant, there has been no movement which can be stated to be a State-wide movement for an issue absolutely relating to the problems of the State. This again indicates that issues affecting the state have not been viewed purely from a narrow end or that the politics has been vitiated on that account.

It is no wonder therefore if regionalism did not create much of a problem in the politics of Orissa or could not remain a sustaining force for long. But Oriya society is not free from such influences and it has perlocated into different spheres of our society, It has spread its tentacles far and wide and into different facets. In this connection our educational policy and policy in regard to recruitment to services have laid down trends of disintegration and regionalism.

Orissa has now 3 General Universities. Nobody would grudge this; probably there is room for more. Orissa is lagging so much

behind in higher education that more and more facilities should be provided for improvement of our education and culture. It would be a folly for any planner to refuse more money for education, for as the saying goes—this is a safe investment where outcome is never nil or more wasteful. But Universities were not established taking into consideration the desirability and suitability of its location to serve the purpose best. But imprint of a spirit of regionalism was made by creating Universities such as Sambalpur and Berhampur. These higher centres of education should really have functioned as focal points of regional harmony and cultural integration. But to our dismay, policies and programmes followed in such institutions create more discord than cooperation and concord. The 'sons of the soil' theory is implemented in a wrong way. If at all it has to be applied, it should be made applicable to the entire people of Orissa who should get first priority, and talents and expertise available in our society should get reasonable scope so that the entire community is benefited. With such scanty scope of opportunity available to the people of Orissa, admission into these 3 Universities, rather 4 and recruitments to its services and teachership should be open to all Orissans and in case of necessity even men and women of learning and wisdom should be brought from outside into this sphere. But admission and recruitment policy is based on the pernicious theory of localism which cuts at the very root of a stable society. There have even been agitations for appointment of Vice-Chancellors on a regional basis. If our boys and girls are brought up and grown and educated in such a narrow atmosphere, their vision is likely to be limited and that catholicity and wider vision which are expected of them at the formative stage of their life is likely to be blurred preventing a healthy growth of our society.

A very wrong and short-sighted policy is also being followed in the services not only in the matter of recruitment, but in the matter of transfers also. The recent trend all over the country is more inter-mingling than exclusiveness. Recently the Government of India has taken a decision to the effect that one third of the judges of any high court bench should be from outside. Such a policy was recommended by the States Reorganisation Commission while advocating and recommending adjustment of

boundaries and formation of new states. As a general rule, it was almost conventional practice that officers would not normally be posted in their home districts lest their decision might be prejudiced. But today's administration is so terror-stricken and motivated that such conventions are observed more in the breach and it is stated that some classes of employees are not permitted to be transferred outside their home areas. Some politicians have openly advocated that all appointments in a particular district must first go to the sons of the same district. This theory is being carried to a ridiculous extent so much so that in the only recently started Konark Jute Mill of Orissa, strike, agitation and political pressure are being put to restrict recruitment not even to the district, but only to the state, and only to that locality where the mill has been set up. This has resulted in indiscipline and confusion in all sectors of society, and such indiscipline and violence are sometimes supported by and connived at the instance of persons who ought to know its consequences. This trend is bound to cause enormous harm to the society as a whole. This whole irony of the situation is that only a privileged few are benefited and the vast bulk of the masses remain as poor and backward as before.

Amongst the 11 Chief Ministers that Orissa has so far, 4 were from the south and the west and they cannot be accused of overlooking the interests of their respective regions. The fact remains that if disparity exists between regions or there is a marked difference and visible backwardness in same districts including the eastern or central region, it is because of some compelling circumstances and not because of deliberate discrimination. The state itself is undeveloped and from the All India angle, there is every justification for the entire state to raise the question of regional disparity and agitate for the state as a whole. Shortsighted political interests would not like to approach the issue from this angle at all and thus they would weaken the claims of Orissa at the centre. These political interests have little considerations for the masses of the people who suffer immensely when the efficiency and effectiveness of the entire administrative apparatus is affected on account of internal division regionally and clash of interests inside the administration itself.

There is a growing demand for circuit sitting of the highest

court of judicature of the state in different regions, decentralisation of the Orissa Public Service Commission and Secondary Board which are made just for the benefit of a few elite. They are hardly prepared to care for the demoralisation and lowering of standard that such divisions are bound to bring in its trail.

There is nothing wrong in raising regional questions and agitating for the fulfilment of regional aspirations. Neither should it be treated as anti-people or anti-patriotic demands. In a country which was under British subjugation for centuries various desires, and aspirations had remained suppressed and they had no opportunity to make their problems felt. After freedom, as a natural consequence, these problems are finding manifestations in different ways and from different quarters. These aspirations have to be contained and tackled keeping the national and patriotic point of view in mind. Suppression or avoidance or even by-passing such problems would not be desirable in the best interest of the country. Political parties have a great role to play in this direction. But political conditions are so unstable and political parties are so fragile in nature, that they become victims of the situation and often have to bow down before such interests, thus jeopardising the over-all interest of the state.

An analysis of the questions put and speeches made by members in the Orissa Assembly all these years—prior to and after freedom—would clearly establish that members were more interested in local and petty matters. They are not to be blamed; rather in a way they evinced interest in problems affecting their constituencies. But very few have individually or collectively made efforts to focus the problems affecting the whole state or even their own regions. Yet, instances are not lacking to show that often pressure groups are formed inside the legislature and in the ruling parties for particular purposes. As per instance, Orissa's feudal land economy cannot be put on improved productivity lines and the dismal poverty and inequality in the rural areas can never be corrected unless there is a radical change in the existing land relationship. Whenever any earnest step has been undertaken in this direction it has been thwarted by the interested pressure groups. Here they cut across regions and parties. All the same such pressure

groups worked both during the Congress and the short-lived Janata rule. During Janata party rule, legislators belonging to as many as 9 districts, calling themselves backward regions, conferred and raised demands which were quite unrelated to the economic conditions of the people of the region or to the general improvement. Regional leaders take advantage of this development; rather some of them take initiative to bring this about and use this platform for their own interest in the matter of transfer, recruitment, appointment in Government and other services; even for party posts, a great hue and cry is raised. The state leaders who are dependent on their support to continue in power have to appease these elements. Since this suits their purpose, these political interests keep the regional spirit alive. A privileged few and some powerful interested groups are benefited at the cost of the State and the regions. These regional feelings and agitations have not posed a danger; neither has it entered into Orissa's political life in such a way nor has it got a foothold for which an alarm is to be raised. This can be successfully contained if there is strong political leadership. It is unfortunate that although All India Parties' leadership is accepted by the people of the state, their nominees or branches are so unimaginative, shortsighted, self-centered and are so much anxious to maintain their own leadership and position of power that they fail to take advantage of this central position to give an objectivity and direction to the administration and politics of the state.

Economically, no case can be established by one region against the other. The whole state is backward and as has been mentioned earlier, for historical, geographical and administrative reasons, there has not been an even growth and development. Political instability and regional pressures have prevented any comprehensive economic planning and programme of activity from being undertaken which could successfully remove disparity and backwardness that exist in some quarters.

Formerly in Orissa, there were talks of 3 regions generally- (1) eastern or central (2) southern and (3) western. Amongst these the western region was more vociferous. After the establishment of Berhampur and Sambalpur Universities, the southern districts have also taken up cudgels against others. Recently there has arisen a regional feeling in the northern region and they are

agitating for a northern University. A member of the assembly from this region has also raised the question of circuit sessions of the Orissa High Court at Balasore and Mayurbhanj on the floor of the Assembly: It is well-known that considerable public agitation is afoot both in the south and in the west to have sittings of the Circuit bench of the High Court in their respective regions. Even in the region, there are disputes over the location amongst themselves.

For the purpose of comparison, one can divide the regions on a notional basis in the following manner. It furnishes an interesting subject of study if one takes into account the population as on 31st March 1978 and the per-capita income in 1977-78 in the districts of the respective regions.

		Population	Per capita income
Northern region-	Balasore	2099762	613.88
	Mayurbhanj	1646576	722.88
	Keonjhar	1095200	807.30
	Total...	4841538	
Western region-	Sundargarh	1183319	1285.20
	Sambalpur	2117386	1138.30
	Bolangir	1450195	784.46
	Kalahandi	1334381	893.18
	Total...	6085281	
Southern region-	Ganjam	2630996	829.61
	Koraput	2343976	997.76
	Phulbani	712509	971.27
	Total...	5867481	
Eastern or Central region.	Cuttack	4390869	822.68
	Dhenkanal	1485443	738.68
	Puri	2686386	753.30
	Total	8562698	

These figures are taken from the Director, Bureau of Statistics

and Economics, Orissa and the population figures quoted above are estimated figures for the year 1978 and per capita income by districts for the year 1977-78 at current prices. The basis on which per capita income is deduced by the Government statisticians might not be taken as depicting the reality of the situation, but this is accepted as the basis for any economic categorisation. It is clear from these figures, that almost all districts are placed on the same footing. In comparison to population, per capita income in the western and southern region is much better than Cuttack, Puri and Dhenkanal districts. Northern region is more backward than any of the other regions and a vast bulk of tribal population lives there. The concentration of scheduled tribe and scheduled caste is on the higher percentage in the districts of Koraput, Mayurbhanj, Phulbani, Keonjhar and Sundergarh. The plight of these sections of our society remains as miserable as before and it is useless to compare them with conditions in regions.

This is not to say that no regional disparity exists in Orissa. The state itself is a worst victim of regional disparity in the country but disparity inside the state is minimal. This is not as would warrant an organisation to fight for the causes. This is apparently the reason for the lack of support of the masses behind regional movements. They flare up when some grave and emotional matters are involved and that occasionally. Hence not much harm has been done so far and it is no good condemning those who in thoir enthusiasm are misled to believe that by highlighting such differences, they would serve the cause of the people of the region better.

But it is idle to expect that such poison as has gone into the midst of the society—almost in a subtle and imperceptible manner-will be removed automatically, more particularly when it has almost been institutionalised in certain spheres of society.

Therefore the movement for integration of the Oriya society as a whole should be intensified. Measures both at the Government and popular level are to be undertaken for positive all-round development. A cultural regeneration for revival of Oriya patriotism would go a long way to create positive reactions. Government and political parties must give up the policy of appeasement in dealing with the evils of regionalism and no quarter should be given to those who advocate or act in support

of a programme or theory that would lead to the disintegration or division of the social and political life.

There must be a systematic planning and economic programme to remove difficulties, social and economic, encountered by different sections and more even treatment should be meted out to different regions. At least, economic development should be so organised as to benefit society at all levels, more particularly weaker sections that are suffering from various disabilities.

It must not be forgotten that out of an estimated population of 2,51,77,000, the weaker section alone constitute as many as 96,17,614. The scheduled tribes alone are more than 23%. They are also the next largest language group in the state (see the chart given earlier). They live in dire poverty and misery. They mostly inhabit hill and inaccessible areas and hardly have any contact with others. By profession and otherwise there has been very little opportunity for social and cultural integration amongst them.

Recently a study has this to say about the tribal society in Orissa. "In the tribal belt of Orissa, the poor resource base is attributable not merely to paucity of investible resources for exploiting the potential but also importantly to the motivation and the institutional frame work of the tribal population. These areas are fertile, rich in natural resources and people are hardworking. Yet the transition from the work and living of tribal societies to the rest seems to be slow.

In fact, poverty and beauty are very often found to co-exist. They are very courteous, warm-hearted and hospitable but their existence is much below the national level per-capita income.

Many projects in these belts of Orissa have little or no linkage with the economy of the regions concerned. This is attributable in part to the particular institutional framework characterised by feudal tendencies and customs and the absence of entrepreneurship and the middle class.

Development of small enterprises based upon local material wherever possible with adequate training in skills for local population would have a better impact in transforming their lives."

Other suggestions apart, what has been underlined is that the transition of these tribal societies to the rest is slow. Regionalism may not pose an immediate threat, but this exclusiveness does.

Oriyas plan their activities excluding these people. Oriya society and Orissa's public life can never be stable unless these vital sections of our community are fully integrated into the social life.

In all our discussions, debates and priorities we have been neglecting this large chunk of our people. It has been almost a fashion with the political and ruling parties to shed crocodile tears for their betterment. Yet in spite of constitutional obligation these weaker sections could not be brought at par with others, and constitutional reservations for them are being extended from decade to decade.

There is now a great ferment all through this belt more particularly in Orissa. Many young tribal activists are now awake and they are going to prove to be a great potential threat to the society as a whole. A new loyalty and new elements are growing fast which are impatient and these have to be contained and fully integrated into Oriya society. Orissa and its people want to make progress. Hence there must be social and cultural intergation programmes in which all should participate.

The emergence of strident regional loyalties may threaten to engulf the one-state dream, but exclusive tribal loyalty exasperated and frustrated might prove to be a most potent factor for the destruction of the Oriya society as well. The society as a whole, particularly its social and political leadership, should take note of this imminent danger and play a positive role.

6

POLITICAL CULTURE OF A BACKWARD INDIAN STATE : ORISSA

J. K. Baral
J. K. Mohapatra

Political culture is a mix of political beliefs, orientations and attitudes. It refers to what the people think how a state should behave , how it is behaving, and it also pertains to how the state is actually behaving. In other words, the political culture of any society is the nexus between this perception about politics and the politics in action.

Political culture studies in western countries are mostly based on macro-surveys. No such macro-survey of Orissan people about their political life has so far been made. However, this deficiency, in the context of our study, is not serious. Many micro and middle-range studies of different dimensions of the political life in Orissa have been made. These are mostly anthropological studies throwing deep insights into the state politics. Further, the absence of macro-surveys in a backward society like Orissa is not a big handicap. Unlike in developed countries, the people of the developing world are not very frank and forthright in their responses to questions. Often they hide facts or remain silent. Therefore, the findings derived from survey studies are to be read with a pinch of salt.

Punishment to Opposition

Orissa is small in territory and population. It is also one of the poorest states in India, though it is not poor in natural resources which go mostly unutilised due to various factors including little leverage that Orissa has *vis-a-vis* New Delhi. It may be pertinent to point out that Orissa is mostly denied its due at the Centre in respect of having proper representation in the Central Cabinet. Most often there is no Oriya at the Centre with the Cabinet rank. In the early fifties H. K. Mahtab was a Cabinet Minister (for

Industries) for a short while before he was unceremoniously dropped. Long after that, during the Janata period (1977-1979) the Central ministry included two Oriyas in the rank of Cabinet Ministers (they were Biju Patnaik and Rabi Ray). Mrs. Gandhi's Government, formed in 1980 included one Oriya in the rank of Cabinet Minister (Janaki Ballav Patnaik). But, after a short stint at the centre, he was sent to Orissa as the Chief Minister. Since then there is no Oriya Cabinet Minister at the Centre. This brief account implies that in Indian politics Orissa is considered a Lilliput, having no significant weight at the Centre. We are not interested here in examining in detail the various factors why Orissa is given such short shrift by the Centre. Not only in respect of sharing the power cake, but also in allocating the central aid. However, it may be pointed out that the size of territory/population would not fully explain this central apathy/discrimination. Some other states with smaller populations and less territory wield more power at the Centre. One of the reasons explaining Orissa's lack of influence at the Centre is its location. It is neither close to New Delhi nor is it strategically located like Jammu and Kashmir or Assam. Another important factor in this regard is its *culture of political opposition.* And these two factors seem to have some linkage. Orissa was the last state in India to come under British subjugation. Till the end the Oriyas fought valiantly against the British invasion. In addition to the bravery and "nationalism" of Oriyas, the other factor in this regard was that the Britishers turned their attention to Orissa only after they succeded in occupying most other parts of India, which they considered more vital. However the fact is that the Central Government, both before independence and after it, tended to regard Orissa as "disloyal" and hence deserved to be punished. Oriya regions were greatly neglected by the British government and the former were forced to be dominated by Bengalis, Biharis and Andhraites. Many times the Congress, which has ruled mostly at the Centre, failed to win absolute majority in the State legislature, and as a result, Orissa has generally been considered a strong fort of the Opposition.

Congress is the dominant party in Orissa, but it has not been able to suppress the opposition. On the other hand, the

Congress has several times been forced to be out of power. The Party suffered its severest loss in 1967 and 1977 although on both occasions, the party also faced national debacles. It is important to note that most of the time when the Congress has lost power in the state, the gainer has been an all-India Party, but a regional party or more then one regional parties. To this category belonged the Ganatantra Parishad and the Jana Congress. Even the Janata Party which captured power in the State in 1977 contained many elements who belonged to these two parties in the past. Except in 1961, on no other occasion before 1980, did the Congress manage to win absolute majority in the State legislature It is true that in the 1980 assembly election, it won overwhelming majority. But like the 1977 assembly election, which the Congress had miserably lost, the 1980 election was not a trend-setter. They were largely reflections of political waves which flooded the country. Therefore, the electoral picture that prevailed in Orissa between 1952 and 1977 is a more reliable precedent of things to come. One can thus hypothesize that Orissa is not a one-party state and the Congress, in spite of its rich heritage, would continue to encounter strong opposition in State politics. The tendency of Oriyas not to give full support to the dominant party--the Congress has seemingly provoked the Congress government at the Centre to punish the former both politically and economically.

Regionalism

To a great extent, *nature has injected inequality into Orissa.* The coastal Orissa, in general, is more fertile than the rest of the state, which contains largely barren and mountainous areas. Irrigation facilities are much better in the former than in the latter. As a result, green revolution became a relative success in parts of the coastal districts. Only in the areas surrounding the Hirakud dam in Sambalpur district, the green revolution has made a dent due to the irrigation facilities provided by this dam. Further, since the British days, communication links of coastal Orissa have been much better than those of the highland Orissa. Similar gap exists between them in respect of other developmental indices

like education, medical facilities, etc. Even though the Western Orissa and South Orissa are rich in natural resources, most of them have remained unutilised. Some major industries have, of course, been established in these regions after independence, But these are far from adequate and the scale, in respect of industrialisation, is still titled in favour of the coastal Orissa.

The history of the state seems to have had an important effect upon the political orientations of its people. Before 1936 Orissa, as a separate state, did not exist, although Oriya "nationality" was very much there. Many areas inhabited by Oriya-speaking people were parts of other states. While south Orissa belonged to Madras state, Western Orissa was a part of Central Province. Further, for a long time, north and many parts of coastal Orissa including Cuttack and Puri districts were administered by Bengal and Bihar governments successively. Moreover, all these areas were inhabited by people of different languages and dialects, although Oriya was the dominant language. However, for a long time, Bengalis who were, so to say, the "masters" of Oriyas during the British time, did not accept Oriya as a separate language. For them, Oriya was a "dialect of Bengali". After a hard and determined struggle Oriya was officially accepted by the British government as a separate language and was gradually introduced as the official language in government offices including courts in Oriya-speaking areas. But the influence of Telugu in South Orissa and that of Bengali in North Orissa combined to remain strong even after the creation of Orissa as a separate state in 1936. Further, unlike in other parts of the state, the people of Western Orissa speak their local dialect called Sambalpuri which is greatly different from Oriya. Besides this, the prevalence of a regional culture consisting of local festivals and customs, much different from those of the rest of the state, has given the people of Western Orissa a feeling of having special status and heritage.

While coastal areas were directly administered by the British government, the princely states, locally called *Garajats*, which comprised hinterland Orissa were ruled by native rulers, owing loyalty to the British government. Due to several measures taken by the British administration, some development took place in coastal Orissa. On the other hand, due to the

arbitrary rule of the native rulers who were mostly oppressive, the *Garajats*, in general, remained backward and poor. Thus, when independence was gained in 1947, there had already occurred a big gap between the two parts of Orissa[1]. After independence the Congress party which was already popular in coastal areas tried to gain strength in princely states. Moreover, officials, most of whom belonged to coastal districts, were posted in Western Orissa. Some of these officials, taking advantage of the ignorance of the people, seemed to have exploited them[2]. With the instigation by local leaders including ex-rulers who felt upset due to the merger of princely states, the people of Western Orissa rose virtually in revolt against the state government, which, in their eyes, was dominated and controlled by coastal politicians and officers. The abortive but intense agitation launched to stop the construction of Hirakud dam was the most visible symbol of regionalism in Western Orissa[3]. Since them, on several occasions, agitations have taken place both in Western and South Orissa to champion regional issues. While some of their grievances are genuine, some others are created by regional elites, not to promote the interests of the whole region, but to further their own interests under the guise of the general causes. Regionalism, due to several factors, has taken deep roots in the minds of the people irrespective of their caste, class and political affiliation.

Caste Politics

Like any other state in India, Orissa is multi-caste, but the castes in the state are neither of equal size, nor of equal power. Further, the confusion between caste and *Jati* has some relevance to the caste system of Orissa. Whether a particular community is a caste or a sub-caste depends upon how one defines the latter.

The important castes of Orissa are Brahmin, Karan, Kshyatriya and Khandayat. Brahmins and Kshyatriyas live in most of the Indian states. The members of "writer" class are known as Karans in Orissa and they are similar to Kayasthas of North India. According to the traditional definition, the members of ruling families and their relations were known as Kshyatriyas,

and the members of militia community fighting for their rulers were known as Khandayats. However, this definition would not fit into the sociological realities prevailing today. As Kshatriyas are ritually superior to Khandayats, the latter tend to raise their status and try to be accepted as the former. Similarly, the former try to retain their traditional social status and not be demoted to the status of Khandayats. However, due to social mobility (upward and downward), many Khandayats have been gradually assimilated into the rank of Kshyatriyas, and some Kshyatriyas have been degraded into the rank of Khandayats. Official position and material condition mainly account for this phenomenon. This would also explain why some people mostly of coastal districts, who were originally Khandayats have become Karans, generally accepted as superior to Khandayats, although a Karans would rarely be demoted to the rank of a Khandayat even if there is deterioration in his material condition. The promotion to higher caste is generally legitimised by marriage bonds.

Khandayats who constitute the largest caste group in Orissa are not homogeneous and well-integrated. Nor is their caste identity properly defined and universally accepted. The Khandayat leaders would say that with the end of the feudal rule the duty of their castemen to "fight" on the battle field expired and they had to choose the occupation of cultivating lands, However, the peasant community of Orissa is, to a great extent, internally differentiated in more than one respect. They are divided among themselves not only in respect of their land-possession, but also in respect of their sub-cultures. Further, the various peasant groups inhabiting different parts of the state are known by different names. Though the leaders of peasant groups of different areas of Orissa would like to call themselves as Khandayats, these groups have local names with some cultural traits peculiar to the locality concerned.

In mid-1950s F. G. Bailey said that Brahmins and Karans were the "dominant castes" of Orissa. This observation, to a great extant,is still true today. They are not only ritually superior to all other castes (perhaps except Kshyatriyas who are superior to Karans), but also dominate the power structure and bureaucracy of the state. Most of the Influential politicians that

the state has produced so far are either Brahmins or Karans. Similarly, most of the top bureacrats and technocrats of the state hail from these two castes. Only in recent years there has been some effort on the part of Khandayats and Kshyatriyas to assert themselves in politics. But they have not yet made much head-way in this direction. Apart from the fact that both Brahmin and Karan politicians have strong patrons and allies belonging to the respective caste at the Centre, another factor in their favour is that they are generally more cunning, shrewd and diplomatic than other caste people, and these qualities are of great help in political games. Kshyatriyas and Khandayats are known for lacking these qualities. No wonder, very often they easily fall to the traps laid for them by Brahmin and Karan politicians. More-over, within the state the Brahmin and Karan politicians get strong support from the bureaucrats and technocrats belonging to their respective castes whereas the politicians of other castes hardly enjoy such advantage. Strange but true, some of the Khandayat bureaucrats and technocrats, who might have Karani-sed themselves through marriage bonds, are closer to Karan politicians than to Khandayat ones.

One important aspect of caste politics in Orissa is the rivalry between Brahmins and Karans. This rivalry incidentally dates back to pre-independence days and it has manifested in different dimensions in post-independence days.[4] The conflict between the two castes is not confined to the political arena only. There is also a bitter ongoing fight between the Brahmin faction and the Karan faction in the bureaucracy. However, it needs to be clarified that neither faction includes only the members of the same caste. The Brahmin faction contains also non-Brahmin members including Karans and the same is true of the Karan faction. However, one will hardly fail to recognise the dominant caste complexion of these factions. These intercaste fights are fuelled by the Oriya press controlled by Brahmins and others. In this respect one has to make a special mention of the *Samaj*, the most popular Oriya daily, with Radhanath Rath, a very old Brahmin politician as its editor. Whenever he falls out with the state government irrespective of which caste controls it, he uses his newspaper against it. But his spear and arrows carry added venom when the government, he opposes, happens to be domina-

ted by non-Brahmins, especially Karans. For the last few years his newspaper has been carrying on virtually a virulent casteist campaign against the present ministry headed by a Karan, J. B. Pattnaik. The newspapers in Orissa are largely characterised by personality orientation and they invariably mirror the views of the men who control them.[5]

Orissa contains a large number of Harijans and Adivasis. While Harijans live in large numbers in coastal districts, the high-land districts are inhabited by a large number of Adivasis. In general, both these groups are backward, socially, economically as well as politically. But between them, the former is less backward than the latter. The Adivasis are exploited not only by clean caste people, but also by some Harijans like Panas in Ganjam and Phulbani districts and Damas in Koraput district. Officials and businessmen, mostly belonging to high and middle castes, subject tribals to different types of exploitation. Worst of all, some tribal elites like political leaders and local contractors have emerged as the latest group of exploiters of tribals.[6] Both Adivasis and Harijans are subdivided into various small endogamous groups called *Jatis*. They greatly differ from one another in respect of their cultural mores and development.

The Harijans and Adivasis have all Orissa organisations formed to "promote and safeguard" their interests. But these bodies are better known for their "ideologies", and slogans than for their functions and achievements. The following things may be said about these organisations. First, they have been relatively more active in socio-cultural fields than in economic and political fields. They have sought to bring about some reforms in their respective communities and taken some steps with a view to raising their social status. Secondly, their efforts at improving the economic condition of their members have been confined more to raising some routine demands than to sincerely trying to achieve them. Thirdly, the respective leaders of these organisations have sought to use them for their personal interests, mostly to promote their political ends. It is not unusual that whenever a prominent Adivasi or Harijan leader feels that he has been denied his "due" in politics, he has invariably mobilised his caste organisation to express his "grievance" and put necessary pressure on his behalf. Once he gets his share of the "spoils",

he would conveniently and blissfully forget the common demands and grievances of his caste members.

Poverty, by and large, has no caste. Poor people are there in all castes, although the existence of poverty in individual castes is not of equal magnitude. There are more poor people among low and low-middle castes than among other castes. In general, the social location and poverty go hand in hand. Orissa is greatly poor mainly due to the presence of a large number of Harijans and Adivasis living in it and the latter are generally poverty-stricken. Further, many members of low-middle castes also suffer from poverty. The economic conditions of high castes like Brahmin, Kshyatriya and Karan are, in general, good. But some of them are also poor. In this sense, poverty knows no caste. But in another respect, poverty is also influenced by caste status. Because of castes feelings and barriers, the poor belonging to different castes fail to realise that they belong to the same group, that they have some common interests and that they need to wage a common struggle to promote these interests. There is status cleavage among the poor members of clean castes. Similarly, they would not join hands with tribals and Harijans whom they consider socially inferior to them. The Harijans feel that they are socially superior to Adivasis and *vice-versa*. Worse still, some sub-castes of Harijans and Adivasis because of their perceived superiority, would not mix with the members of other sub-castes of their respective community. Because of various factors including the lack of adequate spread of education and that of effective efforts by political parties and other political groups to impart proper political training and information, caste consciousness continues to dominate class consciousness. As a result, the struggle for the removal of poverty and ecenomic development has not yet made much headway. Political elites, with vested interests in preventing the growth of such a struggle, seldom miss an opportunity to inject parochialism into the poor groups, thus dissuading them to join hands for their common goals.

Pressure Politics

Pressure is exerted by various agencies on the government to

promote their interests. These agencies include not only organised interest groups, but also semi-organised groups and even individuals. Loosely speaking, individuals indulge in pressure politics when they put pressure upon the government to get their things done. But strictly speaking, pressure politics is mainly a group phenomenon. Various individuals form different groups and associations to further their common causes. They adopt different means to influence the government. An interest group becomes a pressure group when it puts pressure upon the government on behalf of its members. The present study would mainly confine itself to the second type of pressure politics.

The Government of Orissa is subjected to intense pressure by businessmen who are the main economic power in the state. Either directly or through some political leaders, they establish contact with ministers and officials, and by sheer money, seem to win over them. Except the *Kendupatra* dealers of Western Orissa who are known to influence the government through organised group efforts, most other businessman of the states appear to individually pressurize the governments by various means.

In Orissa, people of many vocations have their associations which seek to promote their respective interests. Bureaucrats, technocrats, teachers, ordinary employees, industrial workers and agricultural workers etc. have their own unions.[7] Bureaucrats and technocrats are not affiliated to any political party and they do not often launch agitations for the fulfilment of their demands. However, they are generally successful whenever they articulate some demands. Employee unions, affiliated to different political parties, are huge bodies and potentially powerful. But, at times, the government is also able to keep them on the defensive, by exploiting their internal divisions. During the last one and a half decades, the most successful white-collar union has been the private college teachers' federation which has been able to greatly improve the position and status of its members. The roles of some of the important pressure groups in Orissa are discussed below.

Industrial Workers Unions

Orissa is rich in natural resources, but due to several factors, it

is not highly industrialised. However, some major industries have been established in some parts of the state. Further, a few more big industries are shortly to be set up. Thus there is a sizeable work force in the industrial sector. They are, no doubt, more politicised than agricultural workers. But they are far from the "VANGUARD of revolution" in the Marxian sense.[8] There is a strong competition among political parties to win their allegiance. So far, the Congress and the Communist Party of India have been most successful in this respect. It is important to note that the CPI which is not a major party in Orissa, has, however, a strong grip over its industrial workers. Similarly, the CPI (Marxist) which is hardly visible as a force to reckon within the electoral battle field has some strong pockets of supporters among labourers.

One of the main factors why the trade unions of Orissa have not proved to be very effective is that they are controlled either by a political party which is the ruling party in the state and is in league with concerned managements, or by some other party which is weak and is not able to wield sufficient powers in the policy-making structure of the state. Most of the trade union leaders, who belong to the middle class, fail to genuinely appreciate the difficulties and other problems of workers, and are prone to be won over by the government and the management. Further, these leaders tend to lose their legitimacy in the eyes of workers who become gradually conscious of their "secret dealings and links" with the management, and also in the eyes of the authorities who come to believe that these leaders are "purchasable". In most of labour unions of the state, important office-bearers are active political leaders who lack adequate training, experience, time and genuine motivation to do justice to their role as trade union leaders. Union leadership has almost exclusively remained the domain of men and this is not surprising in view of the fact that women industrial workers are insignificant in number.

Unions of Small Peasants and Agricultural Labourers

It is an ironical feature of Orissa politics that though peasants constitute a very large number of the state population, they have mostly been neglected by political parties. The worst offender

in this respect has been the Congress Party. On the other hand, the CPI has always paid some attention to the problems of peasants. The Ganatantra Parishad which was the most important opposition party in the 1950s had a strong peasant organisation, though its activities were mostly confined toWestern Orissa, the fort of the party. Similarly, for some years, the PSP organised some peasant organisations. During the last few years, in a few areas, especially of South Orissa, the Naxalites and the CPI (M) have been active in organising peasants to promote their interests. However, on the whole, the political parties have paid more attention and devoted more energy to the industrial workers than to small land-owners and landless labourers. No wonder, the small peasants and agricultural workers of Orissa whose lot is much worse than that of industrial workers are politically more apathetic and passive than the latter.

Student Politics

By and large, political leaders, other elites as well as teachers urge the students not to take part in politics. They emphasise that educational institutions are the "temples of learning" and should not be polluted by politics. However, it is often the former who, in their own interests, inject politics into schools, colleges and universities. Incidentally, the politicisation of students in India started for a noble cause—the independence of the country. Once the students tasted politics, they hesitated to give it up even after India became free. Further, political parties, in their interests encouraged and helped students to take part in politics. Many student organisations, owing allegiance to different political parties, came into existence. They are more interested in promoting the interests of concerned political parties than those of the students whose interests they are supposed to safeguard. Of course, whenever they are politically active, they loudly proclaim that they fight for students whereas their real goal is to use the students for the cause of political parties to which they are affiliated. The student organisations of Orissa are not effective mainly due to their divisions on party lines and the betrayal by their leaders who are morally loyal to their political parties than to their supporters. However,

on regional issues, these student organisations are generally able to overcome their political differences and put up a joint front. Such efforts were mainly responsible for the establishment of two regional universities, one in Sambalpur, and the other in Berhampur. The students of Western Orissa had also launched a strong agitation in the early years of independence against the construction of Hirakud Dam, though they failed to stop it. However, their agitation against the "Marwari exploiters" in the early 1980s did not go too far because the students were divided on party lines and the Marwaris seemed to enjoy the support of the ruling party – the Congress – which succeeded in splitting the student movement. Some student leaders have close relations with some teachers who have little interest in academic pursuits. The latter, independent of their political links, instigate their "student allies" in the name of regional and other parochial causes, to launch strike and create disturbances. Unlike in many states of India, the University and college teachers of Orissa do not have the right to join politics. As a result, their spontaneous urge to make their voices heard in the corridors of power is denied an outlet. This seems to motivate some teachers to seek to politically express themselves through the student leaders, who may be won over for the purpose.

Personality Orientation, Factionalism and Coalitional Politics

The politics of Orissa is known for its instability. Except the present ministry headed by Janaki Ballav Pattnaik which was able to complete its full term of five years, no other ministry has ever completed its full-term. Two factors were mainly resposible for this. First, only three times (1961, 1977 and 1980), a party won absolute majority in assembly elections. In all other elections, the majority party with explicit or implicit alliance with other party or parties, formed governments. Such governments, not based on absolute majority support, were vulnerable, from the beginning, to collapse any time. Secondly, the Congress party of the state has almost always been plagued by the virus of *factionalism*. Even before independence, the Congress party was divided into two groups mainly on caste

lines. The spectre of groupism has been hunting the party since then. Personal interests of leaders rather than any ideological considerations have been mainly responsible for such factional conflicts within the Congress party[9]. Even the Janata government (1977-1979), which included a large number of prominent ex-Congress leaders, fell victims to the same disease. During its early phase the present Congress ministry was faced with severe internal squabbles: However, it was able to overcome the challenge and for the time being it is largely free of any factional challenge from within the party.

Personality orientation is an important feature of Orissa politics. Many people are more loyal to personalities than to political parties or ideologies and principles, The relationship between a leader and a follower is a cumulative process and grows over a period of time. The older the relationship, the stronger the bond, and it is more difficult for this bond to break. When a leader leaves a political party and either joins another party or forms a new party, his followers tend to follow him even though they may be having some reservations about the new party of the leader. The rank and file of a party know a party through their leader. In other words, the party for them is what the leader tells them about it. For many people in Orissa the Congress party was the party of H. K. Mahtab and once he left the party, it lost its essence. The same was true of the reactions of the followers of Biju Pattnaik when he left the party in late 1960s. In a feudal set-up with a low level of political modernisation, personalities rather than party ideologies significantly influence the people. However, the number of such personalities having great impact at the state level is not many. In general, at lower level, factors like personality, caste and localism have important bearing on the voters' minds. Bur their influence tends to diminish as you move from lower to higher levels.

Lack of adequate party orientation and ideological orientation, and high salience of personality orientation have a bad implication for the political system of the state. Political leaders. specially of non-Left parties, do not have much compunction in leaving a party and joining another, if they feel that such action would better their perceived personal interests, The prospect of getting ministerial berths or other lucrative jobs is the main motivation

for defection. Once a big political leader decides to defect from his party for such consideration, he would try to "purchase" some of the less important leaders by money and/or other similar temptations. There is apparently little association between political modernisation and the lack of inclination for defection. In fact, people like H. K. Mahtab and Biju Patnaik who once were the topmost leaders of the state Congress did not hesitate to leave the party. However, the record of "cadre parties" like the CPI, CPI(M) and Bhartiya Janata (old Jana Sangh) is much better than that of Congress and other parties in this respect. Though in terms following and votes, the "cadre parties" do not count much in Orissa, they have at least the satisfaction of not having been stigmatized by defections.

Political instability is both a cause and an effect of coalitional politics in Orissa.[9] As, many times no party was able to command absolute majority in elections, several parties entered into explicit or implicit coalitions to form government. While the Mahtab Singh Deo Government and the Swatantra Jana Congress government were based on explicit coalitions, the Nandini Ministry (1974-1976) which enjoyed the support of the CPI without the latter being a formal partner in the government was an example of implicit coalition. Further, as at the centre, the Congress party in state has almost always been a coalition of several interests and forces. So was the Janata Party both at the Centre and in the state during 1977-1979. The coalition governments have mostly failed to be stable. In course of time, internal contradictions which remain latent in the beginning due to the compulsion of the time tend to gradually come to the surface and weaken the governmental structure. Thus coalitional government have generally spawned new rounds of instability after some time. As these coalitions are mostly a--ideological, they lack any strong binding force to keep them together. Further if the main basis of coalition is negative-to prevent somebody else from coming to power—, it is not likely to last long.

Conclusion

Orissa has a backward and semi-feudal society and its people

are generally more loyal to personalities than to political parties and ideologies. However, their commitment to political parties is not insignificant. Many people continue to support the party of their choice irrespective of occasional changes in party leadership. However, there is a distinction between the commitment of the people to a political party and the same to its ideology. Many people, because of several considerations, including habits, family background and socialisation, back a party either having a vague idea about its ideology or without at all being aware of it. This small salience of ideology orientation on the part of the people is mainly due to the backwardness and the semi-feudal character of the Orissan society.

Because of historical accident—the freedom movement-the Congress could take deep roots in different parts of the country including in Orissa. But the Congress in Orissa is not that powerful as to overwhelm all opposition forces. In terms of real popular support—number of votes, as distinguished from number of seats in the Assembly—the non-Congress support has always been strong including the wave year" of 1980. However, because of inadequate political development, parochial forces like casteism, ethnicism, localism and regionalism are still strong, and stand on the way of proper channelisation and consolidation of non-Congress sentiments and attitudes. As a result, the behaviour of non-Congress voters has tended to be highly volatile, prone to violent swing and thus unpredictable. Even the Congress party of Orissa, on account of the personality orientation and the casteism of the people in general, and the selfish motives of leaders in particular, has often been plagued by factionalism, and this has encouraged defections, coalitional politics, and the politics of instability.

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7

THE ORISSA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AN EVOLUTIONARY STUDY

B. C. Rout

Orissa became a separate state in 1936[1]. No wonder, before 1936 there was no Orissa Legislative Assembly. Between 1912 when Bihar and Orissa were carved out from the province of Bengal and made a separate province and 1936, a few Oriyas were members of the Bihar Assembly located at Patna. Since 1936 Orissa had a separate Legislative Assembly. But the representation in it continued to be based upon limited franchise till Independence. It was only in 1952 that members of the Orissa Legislative Assembly were elected on the basis of Universal franchise. Since then it started evolving, although its evolution has not been very significant. The present article is an account of the origin and evolution of the Orissa Legislative Assembly.

Origin of the Orissa Legislature

Before 1936 there was no Legislative Assembly in Orissa. The combined Legislature of Bihar and Orissa had its Secretariat and sittings at Patna in Bihar and Bihar was dominating every sphere. After becoming a separate province, Orissa was placed under the personal rule of the Governor till the end of March, 1937. According to the Government of India (Constitution of Orissa) Order, 1936, the total number of seats at the Orissa Assembly was fixed at 60 out of which 56 seats were to be filled up by election and 4 seats by nomination. The election before Independence was confined to limited suffrage.

First Pre-Independent Assembly (1937-1945)

Elections to the First Orissa Legislative Assembly with provision of limited franchise, were held during the period from 18th January 1937 to 23rd January, 1937. The names of the elected members

were published on 13th February 1937 in the Orissa Gazette. After constitution, the members of the First Assembly took oath on 26th and 27th June, 1937. 28th July 1937 was a memorable day in the constitutional history of Orissa as the first historic session of the First Assembly met on this day in the Ravenshaw College Hall at Cuttack, and it was addressed by His Excellency Sir John Austen Hubbace, the first Governor of Orissa. Again on the same day Mukunda Prasad Das and Nanda Kishore Das were unanimously elected as the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the first Assembly respectively,[2] This Assembly had total 10 sessions and it was dissolved on the 19th September, 1945.

The Second Link Assembly Between Pre-Independence and Post-Independence (1946-1952)

The province of Orissa was placed under Governor's rule from the 30th June, 1945 to the 23rd April, 1946. During Governor's rule, election to the Orissa Assembly was held from 4th April, 1946 to 9th April 1946. The total number of seats in the Assembly was 60, out of which 56 seats were filled up by elected members took oath on 29th May, 1946 and the Assembly was summoned to meet on the same day. In its first meeting held on 29th May, 1946, Lalmohan Patnaik & Mrs. A. Laxmibai were elected as the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker respectively. On 30th September, 1946 a memorable motion was moved in the Assembly to shift the capital of Orissa from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar. As a temporary step and on an experimental basis, the sittings of the Orissa Assembly for a short period of three days, that is, on the 10th, 11th and 12th October, 1949, were held in the new capital, Bhubaneswar.

After the merger of 26 princely states with the province of Orissa the strength of the Orissa Legislative Assembly was raised from 60 to 91. 31 members were nominated to the Assembly from those princely states. These 31 persons took oath as the members of the Orissa Assembly on the 10th October, 1949. From 1937 to 1948 the Assembly Secretariat was under the control of the Law Department of the government of Orissa. It was transferred to the Home Department of the government of Orissa in the year 1948. The assembly had a total of 14 sessions. Four sessions were held before Independence and ten sessions after

it. Finally, the Assembly was dissolved on 12th February, 1952. This Assembly served as a link between pre-Independence and post-Independence periods. The status of the Assembly was changed after the Independence and it continued to work efficiently under the new federal set-up which was introduced by the new Constitution of India in 1950. This "bridge" legislature marked the end of an empire and heralded the dawn of a new epoch.

The First Assembly (1952-1957)

After the commencement of the new Constitution of the Indian Republic, the strength of the Orissa Legislative Assembly was fixed at 140. The First General Elections on the basis of the universal adult franchise was held during the period from 25th October, 1951 to 21st February, 1952, and a great majority of electors of Orissa got the chance to vote for the first time. In this Assembly election out of 140 seats, 21 seats were reserved for the members of the Scheduled Castes and 28 seats for the members of the Scheduled Tribes. For the elections there were 107 constituencies, 74 being single-member and 33 double member.

The result of the First General Elections and the percentage of valid votes secured by the political parties are given below.[4]

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes obtained
Congress	67	39%
P. S. P.	10	11%
Communist	7	5%
Ganatantra Parishad	31	20%
Independents and others	25	25%
	140	100%

In this election the State Congress Party had to face a united *Gadjat* from the ex-States rulers of Orissa who formed the Ganatantra Parishad. Though Congress secured only 48% of total seats, it could manage to have a working majority in the Assembly with the support of some independent members. Subsequently

some independent members joined the Congress Party, thereby raising its strength to 74.

Under Article 188 of the Constitution, the Government fixed 4th and 5th March, 1952 for oath-taking of the newly elected members who took their oath on the above mentioned days and on 4th March, 1952, the first session of the First Assembly after the Independence was held in the Sardar Patel Hall at New Capital, Bhubaneswar. The election of the Speaker was held on 6th March 1952 and Nanda Kishore Das was elected as the Speaker. The election of the Deputy Speaker was held on 8th March, 1952 and Moilevi Mohammed Haneef, was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. Nabakrushna Choudhury, as the leader of the majority party, became the Chief Minister and Shradharkar Supakar of the Ganatantra Parishad was declared as the leader of the opposition. The First Assembly had a total of 9 sessions spreading over 356 days. After the completion of a full term of five years, the First Assembly was dissolved on 4th March, 1957.

The Second Assembly (1957-1961)

In the Delimitation of Constituencies (Orissa Delimitation of Constituencies Order) 1954, the state was divided into 102 constituencies, consisting of 38 double-member consuituencies and 64 single member constituencies to elect a total of 140 members to the State Assembly. Out of these 140 seats, 25 seats were reserved for the members of the Scheduled Castes and 28 seats for the members of the Schedule Tribes. The Second General Elections were held in Orissa from 24th February 1957 to 12th March 1957 for all the Assembly seats. The total number of seats and the percentage of votes secured by different political parties are given below.[5] :—

Dr. H. K. Mahatab as the leader of the single largest party formed the ministry with the tacit support of 9 Communists and 5 Jharkhand members. Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo was declared as the Leader of the opposition. On 27th May 1957 Pandit Nilakanth Das was elected as the Speaker of the Assembly. Jadumani Mangaraj was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly on 29th May, 1957. The newly elected members of the Second Assembly took their oath on 10th, 11th and 12th April, 1957

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes obtained
Congress	56	38 %
P. S. P.	11	10 %
Communist	9	8 %
Ganatantra Parishad	51	29 %
Jharkhand	5	15 %
(Independents)	8	
	140	100 %

and the Governor summoned the Assembly to meet on 27th May, 1957 and addressed the Assembly on the same day. The Congress-Ganatantra Parishad Coalition Government was formed on 22nd May, 1959 and the Coalition Ministry resigned on the 21st February, 1961. During the period, the political parties that formed the opposition could not satisfy the conditions required to be recognised as parliamentary parties and therefore there was no recognised leader of the opposition. The Assembly had a total of 7 sessions spreading over 254 days. The Assembly was dissolved on 25th February 1961 and Orissa was placed under President's rule for the first time from 25th February, 1961 to 23rd June 1961.

The Third Assembly (1961-1967)

The Third General Elections would have been held in the normal course in February, 1962. It was expected that in Orissa President's Rule might continue up to the Third General Elections. But the decision to hold a mid-term election in Orissa was announced by the Union Home Minister in the Lok Sabha on 27th March, 1961. It was announced that the elections would be held from 2nd June to 8th June 1961. The two-member Constituencies Abolition Act, 1961, came into force on 10th March 1961. Application of this Act, in the mid-term Election of Orissa assumed a special urgency. The Chief Election Commissioner after due consultation with political parties and public, announced to have election under the single-member constituency. There were 140 single-member constituencies out of which 54 constituencies were reserved for the Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes. 26 seats

were reserved for the members of Scheduled castes and 28 for the members of Scheduled tribes. The result of the Mid-term Election is given below[6] :

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid vote secured
Congress	82	44 %
Ganatantra Parishad	37	22 %
P. S. P.	10	11 %
Communists	4	8 %
Independents and others	7	15 %
	140	100 %

A new building was constructed and completed on 12th February, 1961 for Orissa Assembly. The estimated cost of the building was Rs. 25 lakhs with the plinth area of 47,000 sq. ft. The new building was inaugurated by the then Vice-President of India, Dr. S. Radha Krishnan on 12th February, 1961. The Assembly was shifted from the Sardar Patel Hall to the new building and the elected members took oath on 26th and 27th June, 1961 in the new Assembly Hall. The election of the Speaker was held on 1st July, 1961 and Lingaraj Panigrahi was elected as the Speaker of Third Assembly. On the 28th August, 1961, Lokanath Misra was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. The Assembly had its First Session in the new building on 21st August, 1961.

As the leader of the majority party, Biju Patnaik became the Chief Minister and formed the ministry on 23rd June 1961. Subsequently Biren Mitra, followed by Sadasiba Tripathy became the Chief Ministers of Orissa on 2nd October, 1963 and 21st February, 1965 respectively. Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo was declared as the leader of the Opposition. The Third Assembly had total 10 sessions spreading over 326 days. This Assembly was dissolved on 1st March, 1967.

The Fourth Assembly (1967-1971)

In the Delimitation of Constituencies (Orissa Order) 1965 there were some changes in the boundaries of the Constituencies without affecting, of course, the total strength of the Assembly

which remained at 140 as before. Election to the Fourth Assembly was held on the 21st February 1967. It was for the first time that the poll was conducted in one day throughout the state without any difficulties. The Ganatantra Parishad had decided to merge with the Swatantra Party in March 1962 and hence it fought the election with the party symbol of the letter. The party position of the Fourth Assembly is given below :

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes secured
Congress	31	30.52
Swatantra	49	22.58
Jana-Congress	26	13.47
P.S.P.	21	11.20
Communist	7	6.26
Communist (M)	1	1.22
S.S.P.	2	1.52
Independent and others	3	13.13
	140	100 %

The election at Parlakhemundi Constituency was countermanded due to the death of a candidate and in the subsequent bye-election a candidate on the Congress ticket was elected from this constituency. On 18th March 1967 Nandakishore Mishra was unanimously elected as the Speaker of Assembly. Harihar Bahinipati, a member of the P.S.P., was elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly on 29th March, 1967. The members had taken their oath on 17th March, 1967. The Swatantra-Jana Congress Coalition Ministry was formed with R. N. Singh Deo as the Chief Minister and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan as the Deputy Chief Minister. Sadasiba Tripathy of the Congress was declared as the leader of the Opposition in the Assembly.

As per the convention the political parties in the Assembly were having whips. But these posts were not officially recognised. In 1969 statutory recognition was given for the first time to these Offices. In that year the Orissa Legislative Assembly Members' Salaries and Allowances Act, 1954 was amended in order to provide an allowance and some other facilities for the Government Chief-whip and Deputy Government

Chief-whip. On 10th April 1969, Sadasiba Tripathy resigned from the leadership of the Congress Party and in his place Binayak Acharya was elected as the leader of the Congress as well as the leader of the Opposition[8]. The Assembly had all total 10 sessions spreading over 196 days. On 11th January, 1971 the President India issued a proclamation suspending the Assembly. On 23rd January, 1971 another proclamation was issued dissolving the Orissa Assembly.

The Fifth Assembly (1971-1973)

The Fifth General Election to the Orissa Assembly and to the Lok Sabha were held simultaneously on 5th March, 1971 and for the second time the poll was conducted on a single day in Orissa. It may not be out of place to point out here that in the 1951-52 elections, the poll was completed in a period of 36 days. It was reduced to 14 days in 1957 elections. In the Mid-term elections held in the year 1961, the period of poll was further reduced to 5 days. The party position in the Orissa Assembly as per the election result was as follows[9] :

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes secured
Congress (R)	51	28.18
Swatantra	36	17.44
Utkal Congress	33	23.83
P. S. P.	4	6.08
C. P. I.	4	4.79
Jharkhanda	4	1.68
C. P. I. (M)	2	1.20
Congress (O)	1	1.81
Jana-Congress	1	5.16
Independents	4	7.68
Others	—	2.15
	140	100%

The elected members of the Fifth Assembly took their oath on 9th and 10th April, 1971. On 12th April 1971, Nandakishore Misra (Swatantra), who was the Speaker in the previous Assembly, was

elected as the Speaker. On 6th May, 1971 Narayan Birabar Samant (Utkal Congress) was elected as the Deputy Speaker. The first session of the Fifth Assembly was summoned to meet on 3rd May, 1971. The Swatantra and Utkal Congress formed the coalition ministry headed by Biswanath Das who was afterwards elected from Rourkela constituency in the bye-election. When majority of elected members of the Utkal Congress decided to join the Congress Party, the Chief Minister, Das tendered his resignation. The Congress Party formed the Government with Mrs Nandini Satpathy as the Chief Minister from 14th June, 1971 to 3rd March, 1973. Binayak Acharya, leader of Congress Party, was the leader of the Opposition from 4th May 1971 to 14th June 1972. R. N. Singh Deo of the Swatantra Party was the leader of the Opposition from 14th June 1972 to 9th February, 1973. When the Pragati Legislature Party was formed, its leader Biju Patnaik acted as the leader of the Opposition for a short period from 9th Fubruary 1973 to 3rd March, 1973. The Fifth Assembly had convened five sessions during the short span of its life, spreading over 131 days. The Assembly was dissolved on 3rd March, 1973.

The Sixth Assembly (1974-1977)

On the basis of the census figures of 1971, the strength of the Orissa Legislative Assembly was increased to 147 by the Delimitation Commission. The Sixth General Elections to the Orissa Legislative Assembly were held on the 22nd, 24th and 26th February, 1974.

Originally there was programme for one day poll. But due to the strike of the non-gazetted Government servants immediately prior to the poll and the consequent shortage of vehicles and polling personnel causing considerable dislocation in the conduct of election, the poll was spread over three days in 1974 in Orissa. The party position of the Sixth Assembly as per the election result was as follows[10] :

The members of the Sixth Assembly took oath on 11th March, 1974. On 21st March, 1974 Brajamohan Mohanty was elected as the Speaker of the Sixth Assembly. On 29th March, 1974 Chintamani Jena was elected as the Deputy Speaker. The first session of the Sixth Assembly was convened on 22nd March, 1974.

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes secured
Congress	70	37.44
Utkal Congress	35	26.45
Swatantra	21	12.08
Jharkhanda	1	0.60
C. P. I.	7	4.87
C. P. I. (M)	3	1.11
Socialist Party	2	1.77
Jana Congress	1	1.17
Independents	7	13.05
Others	—	1.40
	147	100 %

The Council of Ministers was sworn in on 6th March, 1974, with Mrs. Nandini Satpathy of the Congress Party as the Chief Minister. After her resignation, Binayak Acharya became the Chief Minister of Orissa from 29th December, 1976 th 30th March, 1977. Biju Patnaik, leader of Pragati Legislature Party, was declared as the leader of the Opposition from 19th March, 1974 to 16th December 1976. Again he continued as the leader of the Opposition representing the Bharatiya Lok Dal till 24th March, 1977. In the meantime a new party known as Janata Party was formed and as such Ramprasad Mishra, leader of Janata Legislature Party, was declared as the leader of the Opposition on 31st March, 1977 and ceased to be so on 30th April, 1977. This Assembly had, in total, 9 Sessions, spread over 150 days. The Sixth Assembly was dissolved under Article 356 of the Constitution with effect from 30th April, 1977.

The Seventh Assembly (1977-1980)

The elections for the Seventh Orissa Legislative Assembly were held on the 10th June, 1977. The party position of the Seventh Assembly as per the election result is given below[11] :

The elected members took oath on 29th June, 1977. Satya Priya Mohanty was elected as the Speaker of the Assembly on 1st July, 1977. Surendranath Naik was elected as the Deputy Speaker on 27th July, 1977. The first session of the Seventh

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes secured
Janata	110	49.17
Congress	26	31.02
C. P. I.	1	3.57
C. P. I. (M)	1	0.88
Independents	9	14.31
Others	—	1.05
	147	100 %

Assembly was summoned to meet on 20th July, 1977. Nilomani Routray as the leader of the Janata Party which secured absolute majority, formed the ministry and became the Chief Minister. Chintamani Panigrahi of the Congress Party became the leader of the Opposition from 29th June 1977 to 20th February, 1978. After that Brudaban Nayak of the Congress Party was declared as the leader of the Opposition from 20th February 1978 to 3rd September 1978. Again Prahallad Mallick was declared as the leader of the Opposition from 3rd September, 1979 to 13th February 1980. The Assembly had seven sessions covering 118 days in total. President's Rule was proclaimed on 17th February, 1980 and it was revoked on 9th June, 1980. The Seventh Assembly was dissolved on 17th February, 1980.

The Eighth Assembly (1980-1984)

Elections to the Eighth Legislative Assembly were held on 31st May, 1980. The result of the 1980 elections is given below :

Election at Nimapara Constituency was countermanded due to the death of a candidate. Two more seats were vacant due to resignation. Biju Patnaik who was elected as member of the Lok Sabha in January 1980 was also elected from Patkura Assembly Constituency. He resigned from his Patkura seat and continued to be the member of the Lok Sabha. Rasananda Sahoo, who was elected as an M. L. A. from Athagarh constituency, resigned from his membership with effect from 7th October 1980. The bye-elections for these three seats were held on 23rd November, 1980. Two seats went to Congress (I) and one seat to Janata

Party	Seats	Percentage of valid votes secured
Congress (I)	117	47.93
Janata (C. S.)	13	19.56
Janata (J. P.)	3	4.01
C. P. I.	4	4.78
Congress (U)	2	7.07
Independents	7	11.88
Others	Nil	4.77
Vacant	1	—
	147	100.00

(C.S), which was subsequently known as the look Dal. Janaki Ballava Patnaik, who had been sworn as the Chief Minister of Orissa on 9th June 1980 was elected from Athagarh in the Ibye-election.

None of the Opposition parties secured the requisite number of seats, as a result of which, there was no recognised leader of the Opposition in the eighth Legislative Assembly. Sarat Kumar Deb was declared as the Leader of the largest opposition group in the Assembly.

Ninth Assembly

In March, 1985 the elections were held to the Orissa Legislative Assembly and the following was the result :

Party	Seats
Congress	117
Janata	19
C P I	1
B J P	1
S U C I	1
J O	1
Independents	5
	146

J. B. Pattnaik, the leader of the Congress, became the Chief

Minister. Prasanna Kumar Das and Chintamani Dhyan Samentaray of Congress, were elected as the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. Biju Patnaik who was elected from the prestigious Bhubaneswer seat resigned his Lok Sabha seat and was elected as the Leader of the Opposition. His presence in the Assembly has provided fire and vitality to the proceedings.

Conclusion

The author who was the Research Officer of the Orissa Legislative Assembly for several years had the privilege of observing from very close quarters the legislative behaviour of the members of the Assembly. By and large, their performance is far from satisfactory although some of them are interested in improving it. As a large number of members hail from either low or low-middle stratum of the society, they lack in adequate education and proper political socialisation to do their job efficiently. Further, as the level of politics of this backward State is not high, and as there is a linkage between the level of politics and the legislative behaviour, the MLAs of Orissa are tempted to neglect their legislative duty and indulge in other materially profitable things. It is urged that these members should be exposed to good training and academic discussions and provided with sufficient expertise and library facilities. Periodical orientation camps should be organised for the MLAs, particularly those belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes who, in general not only lack in necessary educational and political background, but also in self-confidence.

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8

ORISSA LEGISLATORS : PROFILE AND PERCEPTIONS

M. K. Mohapatra

Investigations into the social backgrounds and attitudinal orientations of legislators is considered as a significant area of legislative behaviour research. Much has been systematically explored about the social background and perceptions of legislators in Western political systems.[1] Only a few such studies have been attempted in India.[2] Besides, most of these studies have generally focussed their attention on the Indian Parliament. Only very few studies have explored the background attributes and perceptions of Indian state legislators.[3] The aim of this study is to fill in this gap in the realm of legislative behaviour research, in the context of Indian states. Although the data presented here is confined to a single state--Orissa--and related to the 1967 Assembly, its conclusions may have relevance for legislators in most Indian states including Orissa even today.

During the summer of 1969 a purposive sample of 85 members of Orissa Legislative Assembly was interviewed by the author. This sample was designed to exclude incumbents and former members of Orissa Cabinet and the presiding officers. Thus the sample represented the membership of the Assembly that was not directly associated with the administrative system of the state.

Social Origin

The distribution of various caste groups among the membership of the Orissa Assembly suggests a number of patterns. First, in the entire house the representation of certain caste groups is slightly out of proportion. Brahmins and Karans, the dominant castes in Orissa, constitute nearly eight percent of the state's population; however, in the Assembly under studer study (1967), their representation is well over twenty-eight percent. Second, the Swatantra party which had its power base in the tribal regions of western Orissa had the highest proportion of scheduled tribes

among its legislators. Third, the Swatantra, despite its historical association with the princes of the former feudatory states of western Orissa did not have a significantly higher percentage of ex-rulers among its legislators in the Assembly than such parties as Congress or Jana Congress. Fourthly, there was lack of any evidence about the representation of any specific caste group exclusively in any particular party.

On the basis of subjective *class* identification by the respondents, the following patterns were noticed. First, the MLAs of Left parties, in general, identify themselves with the poor class while most of Swatantra MLAs identified themselves with the middle or rich classes. Second, the hill district legislators, in general, tend to identify themselves with classes higher than the coastals. This may imply the possibility that the hill district recruits tend to come from a higher economic background.

Ecological Origin

Our data suggests the 'local boy' image of Orissa legislators comparable to American state legislators.[4] Nearly eightyfive percent of respondent legislators have their permanent residence in the constituencies from where they were elected.

Orissa is predominantly a rural state, and according to the 1961 census, ninety-four percent of the people live in rural areas. However, among the legislators the percentage of those who spent their childhood in a rural setting is probably lower. Our data shows that a much higher percentage of legislators than the general population spent their childhood in semi-urban settings.

The travel profile of MLAs is quite disappointing. Only five percent of MLAs have been outside India. This figure may go up slightly if we include ministers and ex-minister legislators in our sample. However, it is extremely surprising to note that eleven percent of the respondents never travelled outside the state of Orissa.

Occupational Background

First, a significant percentage of legislators in Orissa did not have any specific occupation before their entry into politics; such

individuals indicate 'politics', 'social work', 'upliftment of rural areas' as their occupation. Some of them do become involved in the organizational work of the party. Others may be educated, unemployed young men who remain in the village and perform a linking role between the illiterate villagers and the public bureaucracy.

Agriculturists constitute the second lar gestgroup in the Assembly and the increase in their strength in the present Assembly is above 100 percent. In the 1961 Assembly, 11 legislators belonged to the agricultural class whereas in the 1967 Assembly, 22 legislators came from this background. The scanty representation of lawyers in the Assembly could be explained by the educational backwardness of the state. The strength of school teachers among the freshmen legislators indicates a significant trend in recruitment. The high school teachers are a type of rural intellectuals in predominantly rural Orissa. The representation of businessmen is extremely low. Finally, in comparison with the Indian Lok Sabha, the Orissa Assembly has a proportionately lower percentage of lawyers, and businessmen but a higher number of politicians, teachers, former rulers and government servants.

Educational Background

Between thirty-three and thirty-five percent of Orissa legislators had less than a high school education. Even among the freshmen

Table-1 Educational qualification of Orissan legislative members (in percentage)

Level of education	Assembly 1961-67 N=136	Freshmen 1961-67 N=69	Assembly 1967-70 N=73	Freshmen 1967-70 N=73	Cabinet 1961-67 N=22	Cabinet 1967-70 N=20
Less than High school	33	33	35	37	4	20
High school	12	13	13	13	4	20
College*	53	53	48	49	90	60
LL.B.	12	14	13	13	18	25

*Includes LL.B.

legislators of the 1967 Assembly this group constituted about thirty-seven percent. Although a very small percentage of the legislators were lawyers, a much higher percentage had low degrees. In general, about forty percent of the legislators had a college degree or at least some years of college education. Among the college degrees held by the legislators those in education, figure as high as Master of Arts and LL.B. The degree holders in Science and Technology are very few.

Political Socialization

Nearly sixty percent of legislators had relatives in politics. Unlike the Western studies, family and other forms of primary groups are not considered as very significant political socializers by the Orissa legislators. The influence of events and leaders seems to be the greatest source of political socialization. Among the hill district lower castes, the legislators, personal pre-disposition figures as the highest source of political socialization. Perhaps

Table-2 Major sources of political interest

(in percentage*)

Sources of Interest	All legislators N=85	Upper caste coastal N=27	Lower caste coastal N=12	Upper caste Hill N=9	Lower caste Hill N=27
Primary group	21	22	23	15	21
Political and Civil participation	36	31	46	46	32
Influences of Leaders	57	60	60	54	48
Influence of movements	51	40	30	46	60
Personal predispositions	45	27	38	61	54

*Percentages total more than 100 since some legislators indicated more than one source of political interest.

this may be explained by the fact that Orissa politics was in earlier times dominated by the upper castes, and it is only in recent years that the lower castes had the opportunity to participate (Table-2).

The time of political socialization, in general, suggests that it may occur at any point in life. However, in the case of legislators, this orientation occurs before attaining adulthood. About seventy five percent of legislators indicated that political socialization matured during or before adolescence. Further, in the case of the coastal upper caste legislators, political socialization tends to occur earlier than hill district legislators, especially in comparison with the lower caste legislators.

Age of Legislators

L. M. Singhvi has claimed that most legislators tend to overrepresent the 'over forty' group and identifies that Indian parliamentarians tend to be younger than their counterparts in other parts of the world.[5] A comparison of the age distribution of Orissa legislators in the 1961-67 and 1967-1971 Assemblies also reveals such a pattern. In the 1961-67 Assembly, the 'under forty' legislators constituted almost fifty percent of the legislators, and the freshmen legislators included sixty-one percent who were below forty. In the 1967-71 Assembly the percentage of 'under forty' legislators was somewhat reduced, although among the freshmen legislators of this Assembly, sixty-four percent were under forty. This trend suggests a tendency toward the recruitment of younger and in-experienced legislators. Besides a great bulk of such lower-age recruits come from the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe constituencies.

Purposive Role or Legislative Goal[6]

The Orissa MLAs, in their response to the question relating to why they contested in the election mentioned one or more than one of the three goals as the motives. These were ideological goals,policy-oriented goals and areal goals. The frequencies of the responses of MLAs were as follows:

Table-3 Distribution of Legislative Goals of Legislators

Legislative Goals	Responses of Legislators N=85
Ideological goals	52%
Policy-Oriented goals	56%
Areal goals	75%

Legislators' Perception of Constituency

Political Behaviour

The legislators were asked to give their view of the electoral behaviour of the people of their respective constituencies. Their responses have been tabulated and presented in Table—4. A very large number of legislators think that they were elected due to their service records (services rendered to the people of their constituencies) and the strong support of the committed voters (who strongly identify themselves with a political party). More than coastal voters, the hill voters think that the voters are significantly influenced by feudal loyalty and traditional ties. Feudal loyalty, refers to the influence of ex-Rajas while traditional ties

Table-4 Legislator's Perceptions of Factors Influencing Constituency Voting Behaviour (in percentage)*

Factors	Coastal upper caste N=27	Coastal lower caste N=12	Hill upper caste N=9	Hill lower caste N=37
Feudal Loyalty	4	0	38	21
Traditional Ties	18	23	61	62
Interest groups	13	12	6	13
Constituency service	100	12	92	84
Party identification	99	70	70	56

*Total exceed one hundred in each column as respondents indicated more than a single factor.

include the influence of caste, family, religion and language etc.

Conclusion

The background and perceptual data about the Orissa legislators presented above may be meaningfully related to the general body of literature in legislative behaviour. From methodological view point this research indicates the practicability of conductiong systematic legislative behaviour studies in Indian states. The substantive contribution of this paper could be evaluated on the basis of the following conclusions. First, as it clearly appears, the legislators in Orissa tend to have elite social origin somewhat like their counterparts in other political systems. This is inspite of the Indian constitutional provisions relating to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Second, the legislative goals or purposive roles of these legislators generally tend to be constituency oriented. This again tends to be the case in many other political systems. Third, a very small minority of Orissa legislators seem well-trained for the role of law-maker with appropriate legal and professional experience. This is in marked contrast with the trends in Western literatures (especially American) where lawyers constitute a majority.

These three major substantive conclusions about the attributes and attitudes of Orisssa legislators should lead us to another unanswered significant question : what impact do these attributes of the legislators have on the functions and output of the legislature as a political system ? Although an answer to this question shall be largely speculative in nature, we may consider it. It seems that most members of Orissa Legislative Assembly are unlikely to be interested in the law-making function of the Assembly. This task is likely to be taken over by the competent elites of the legislative system in collusion with the civil servants. On the other hand, the average member is likely to find much satisfaction through what he may call 'constituency service'. In the absence of meaningful role in the formal process of law-making, his role as the constituency 'errand boy' is likely to emerge as a dominant role. It seems that the legislators in Orissa, although formally elected to be the law-makers for the political system, in reality neither perceive nor behave as such. Thus, it clearly appears

that the manifest functions of Orissa Legislative Assembly as a political structure largely ignores its latent functions--the errand-running function of the legislators in Orissa.

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9

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR IN THE INDIAN STATES: A CASE STUDY OF ORISSA.

Digambar Mishra

Introduction

A distinguishing feature of state government in India is the existence of a federally appointed governor with a dual role. First, as the head of state, he makes a parliamentary system of government work at the state level. Second, as a federal representative, he rules the state during a state emergency when the federal government takes over the state administration under Article 356 of the Indian Constitution. This duality has produced two contradictory interpretations of the governor's role from students of the Indian Constitution. One view held by students of traditional legal persuasion is that the governor under the Constitution is an independent and neutral authority similar to the British monarch.[1] His primary role is to make the parliamentary system of government work at the state level. He should never act under the direction of the federal government at any time, not even in a state emergency during which the federal government takes over the state administration and designates the governor to administer the state on its behalf.

On the other hand, some other students of the Indian governor, including a past governor, have held that the governor under the Constitution is both a head of State and an agent of the federal government.[2] They argue that the provision for the appointment of a governor was incorporated in the Constitution in order to enable the federal government to oversee the working of representative governments in the states. However, if the governor finds that a lawful government is not available, or if, once in office, it has transgressed its limits in terms of Constitutional propriety, he recommends to the federal government the imposition of a state emergency under Article 356 of the Constitution. In

support of this argument, they refer to the intentions of the framer of the Constitution. According to them, B. R. Ambedkar, who is recognized as the chief architect of the Constitution, had assured the Constituent Assembly that these seemingly anti-federal provisions of Article 356 would be imposed only in "grave emergency" situations threatening the unity of India. This battle over the legal-constitutional position of the governor in the context of Article 356 has engaged the attention of Indian academics from the establishment of the Constitution until the present. Consequently, the actual working of the governorship has received little notice. This study of the role of the governors of one Indian state was an attempt to fill an apparent gap.

The Focus of the Present Study

It is the purpose of this study to examine the actual role of the governor in an attempt to remedy the weaknesses described in the above writings on the governor. In particular, the study will analyze the role of the governor during several state emergencies in Orissa.[3] However, primary attention will be given to the 1973-74 emergency since it was of the longest duration 368 days.

The basic hypothesis of this study is that the role assigned to the governor by the Constitution is not in fact the role actually played by the governor. While his constitutional role is that of a neutral head of state, his actual role seems to be one with considerably more political overtones. The governor's actual role appears to be shaped by: (1) the nature of the relation between state government and federal government; (2) political stability or instability in the states; and (3) the nature of the party system.

The Governor in the Changing Pattern of Federal-State Relations

For over a decade since the introduction of the present Constitution in 1950, India was little more than a unitary state. The state governments were clearly subjugated to a powerful federal government within the framework of a single party (Congress) dominance. Over the years their status and authority within the federal structure were yielded in recognition of the necessity of

a strong energized federal government. It was as though the states were left at the mercy of the federal government operating primarily as the creatures of federal departments and not as constituent units. Because the Congress party was in power in almost all the states and because the chief ministers and governors were very much dependent for their positions on the patronage of India's first charismatic Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru (1947-64), there was hardly any occasion for the governors to use any discretionary power concerning the choice of a chief minister or imposition of federal rule. The governorship during Nehru's period was virtually a nominal and ceremonial one.

The fourth general election held in 1967 without a Nehru saw the beginning of a change in the existing federal-state relations. With the loss of the Congress Party majority in eight states and the resulting substantial decline of its strength at the federal level the accepted consensual model of the Indian federation gave rise to serious conflicts in the system.[4] This period lasted until the midterm parliamentary elections of 1971 and saw the development of serious conflicts within the dominant Congress Party which resulted in its division in 1969. The rise and fall of state governments as a result of political defections became the order of the day. During these years of a weak federal government and unstable states, the governors were called upon to exercise their discretion both in appointing and dismissing the chief ministers and in recommending presidential rule in order to halt the trend towards what in the American context may be described as a "states rights" movement.[5]

The third phase of the federal-state relations, which began after the massive victory of Mrs. Gandhi's Congress Party in the 1971 midterm parliamentary elections, witnessed vigorous efforts on the part of Prime Minister Gandhi to restore the federal authority. In the 1972 March elections of sixteen state legislatures, she reversed the fallen image of her Congress Party.[6] After this massive victory in state elections and until her fall in 1977, she used the instrument of presidential rule to liquidate any dissent by any non-Congress Party state government against a strong federal government. During this short period, the governors of the states, still ruled by the opposition parties, were encouraged to manipulate political situations under the veil of failure of for-

mal constitutional procedures.

During 1972-76 there were seventeen cases of president's rule and the States of Gujrat, Uttar Pradesh and Orissa were subjected to this central rule more than once. For example, Gujrat experienced it thrice, the other two states, twice each.

The defeat of the Congress Party in the Parliamentary elections of 1977 and the exit of Mrs. Gandhi from power and authority did not change the federal-state picture substantially. While the Janata Party, which succeded the Congress Party at the federal level, restored individual freedom and democratic rights that had almost been eclipsed during Mrs. Gandhi's emergency rule, it failed to show federal tolerance and restraint towards the non-Janta Party government in states. The Janata Party government dismissed the Congress Party governments of nine states including Orissa by a single presidential order on 30th April 1977 issued under Article 356 of the Constitution. This federal action was unprecedented since never before in the history of the Indian Republic had a proclamation of federal assumption of any state administration been issued without a formal report from the governor concerned. The argument in favour of such action not withstanding -- the Congress Party governments in these states lost their mandate to rule because of the party's defeat in the parliamentary elections -the Janata Party was criticized as "partisan" and "anti-federal" by the Congress Party leaders.[7] Thus, the Janata Party government reaffirmed a strong federal government in the line of its predecessor, the Congress Party.

This increasing use of the federal assumption of state administrations under the pretext of "Constitutional failure of state Machinery" under Article 356 has not resulted in the obsolescence of the Indian state or the demise of the Indian federal system. It has, however, created grave tensions in the federal state relations. The governors are alleged to have aided the federal governments in either liquidating the legitimate state governments opposed to it or resolving the political crises arising out of interparty or intraparty conflicts to the advantage of the ruling party at the federal level.[8] Contrary to the role envisaged by the constitution-makers, the president's role provisions has not always been used only in grave emergency situations as was intended.[9] On the countrary, the governor's role in interpreting a political situation as

one in which the government of the state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution has been heavily influenced by partisan considerations.

The Case of Orissa

In the context of this general picture of the governor's position in the federal-state relations, it is intended to study the case of Orissa, which has been one of the four states in the country to have experienced the highest incidence of presidential rule, a total of six since the promulgation of the Constitution. What kinds of situations have culminated in the imposition of president's rule in Orissa ? Who were the governors who recommended such federal action ? Could they be best described as political activists or neutral constitutional heads ?

This study of state emergencies in Orissa attempts to answer these questions by examining the role of the governors who held the office and the political-administrative conditions in which they recommended or supported such central actions. The analysis of these cases of presidential rule indicates that both governors and their setting in Orissa have undergone substantial changes. Once nominal heads whose concern rarely extended beyond administering the oath of office to the members of a new cabinet or to inaugurating a new legislature, the Orissan governors have gained major new powers of tenuous constitutional validity that have greatly increased their influence in the state politics.

The 1961 Emergency

The First crisis in the working of the parliamentary government in Orissa occurred on February 22, 1961 when H. K. Mahatab, the Chief Minister of the Congress-Ganatantra Parishad Coalition government, submitted his resignation to the governor.

On receipt of Mahatab's resignation letter, the governor contacted the opposition parties, particularly the Ganatantra Parishad, about the formation of an alternative government. Before they expressed their inability to do so, the governor recommended the dissolution of the state assembly and the imposition of presi-

dent's rule under Article 356. On February 25, 1961 Orissa became the sixth state in the nation to come under the central rule since the introduction of the new Constitution.

The decision of the federal government to declare a state of emergency in the state for a brief period and then to hold a mid-term election was in response to the demand of a group of ambitious young dissidents within the Orissa Congress Party who were opposed to the leadership of Mahatab. These dissident party members had earlier demonstrated their strength within the party organisation by electing their leader, Biju Patnaik, as the party's state unit President. In fact, after his election as president on 13th February, 1961, Patnaik persuaded the Prime Minister and the party's central high command to ask Mahatab to resign in the interest of the Congress Party organisation. The Orissa Pradesh Congress Committee under the presidentship of Patnaik also passed a resolution calling for the dissolution of the coalition government in the state.[10]

Thus, the so-called emergency situation in Orissa developed the way the dominant faction of the state Congress Party wanted it to develop. What was more amazing was that Prime Minister Nehru, who was averse to petty maneouverings in state party politics, showed reluctance to disregard the wishes of the local Congress organisation.

Governor's Role

Contrary to the spirit and letter of the Constitution as well as to the established parliamentary conventions, Governor Y. N. Sukthankar dabbled in party politics in order to protect the interests of the ruling party at the federal level. Why did the governor, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service who had risen to the highest position of the cabinet secretary in the Central Government plunge into such partisan politics ?

As the cabinet secretary to the government of India, Sukthankar had been an important advisor to Prime Minister Nehru in the early fifties. Besides, as an Oxonian, he also was close to the Western liberal ideas of the Cambridge-trained Prime Minister. His appointment to the governorship of Orissa reflected the confidence of the Prime Minister in him. All of these factors

heavily influenced his gubernatorial role perceptions. In actual role behaviour, Sukthankar departed from the position of strict neutrality of a head state in a parliamentary system of government. He tried his best to safeguard the party interests of the Prime Minister, to whom he owned his governorship. The rules of the game of the parliamentry system of government became conspicuous in their violation, particularly by the governor, the "impartial" referee. The opposition parties were helpless spectators of this strategy of Central dominance.

The 1971 Emergency

The intensification of factionalism in the Congress finally resulted in a minor split. The minority faction led by Mahtab left the party in 1966 and formed a new party called Jana Congress. This new party in alliance with the Swatantra won the 1967 Assembly election and formed a coalition government with R. N. Singh Deo of Swatantra as the Chief Minister. Mahtab whose weakness for power was very strong found it too uncomfortable for him to stay outside power for long. We asked his followers to leave the party. In the mean time, Biju Patnaik who lost the confidence of the High Command left the party along with his followers and formed the Utkal Congress.[11] Mahtab, hoping that his comeback to Congress (R) would enable him to become the Chief Minister, engineered the fall of the coalition government. At his bidding, his followers in the cabinet resigned and asked the Governor for immediate dismissal of the Chief Minister.

On January 7th, Governor Ansari formally asked the Chief Minister to prove his majority by seeking a vote of confidence in the assembly at the earliest possible opportunity.

Suspension of the Assembly

In the mean while, the Chief Minister's efforts to enlist the support of the Utkal Congress Party failed. On realising that it would be futile to call an assembly session to prove his majority, Singh Deo resigned on January 9th, 1971 and advised the Governor to dissolve the state assembly. The Governor accepted

the resignation of the Chief Minister. However, he refused to recommend the dissolution of the assembly as advised by the outgoing chief minister on the legal ground that the advice did not have the approval of the full cabinet[12].

On January 11, 1971 the Governor recommended to the federal government the imposition of president's rule in the state under Article 356. On the same day, for the second time after almost a decade, Orissa came under the central rule. The state assembly, however, was kept in suspended animation until January 23 when it was dissolved by another presidential proclamation. A mid-term election for the state assembly was ordered to be held on March 5, 1971 along with the mid-term parliamentary election.

The Issue of Assembly Dissolution

Why did the governor recommend to the federal government to keep the assembly in suspension for as many as twelve days when he knew that the largest single majority party (Swatantra) had failed to secure the support of the Utkal Congress Party?

The answer is simple. As a strong supporter and an appointee of Mrs. Gandhi, Governor Ansari wanted to give enough time to the state Congress (R) Party to secure the merger of the Jana Congress Party in its bid to form an alternative government in the state. In addition, the Congress (R) Party also needed time to encourage defections from other parties, particularly the Swatantra, in order to establish its majority. In other words, the interest of the Prime Minister's party influenced the actions of the Governor.

As has been stated earlier, the Swatantra—led government in the State was toppled with the implicit approval of Mrs. Gandhi. She was free to use any means to install a government of her own choice. But as Professor Dua observes, the political background of Mahatab, the main claimant to the chief ministership, did not inspire her confidence in him[13]. Consequently, she decided in favour of a midterm election for the state assembly. Ansari quietly obliged her by completing the formal process for the dissolution of the assembly.

To sum up, an analysis of the factors leading to the creation

and resolution of the 1971 political crisis in Orissa reveals the partisan role of Governor Ansari. In a parliamentary system of government, the right of recommending the dissolution of the legislature is a prerogative of the head of government. As the neutral constitutional head of state, the Governor should have honoured the advice of his outgoing chief minister to dissolve the state assembly.

The 1973 Emergency

In 1971 Assembly election no single party won absolute majority and the Utkal Congress and Swatantra formed a coalition ministry. But this ministry was toppled by the defection of a large number of Utkal Congress MLAs to the Congress (R) in June, 1972. A Congress (R) government headed by Mrs. Nandini Satapathy came into being in its wake. But she was forced to resign in March, 1973 when the erstwhile members of Utkal Congress withdrew their support from her government and went back to their parent party. Being sure that she had lost the majority support, Mrs Satapathy at 7 A. M. on 1 March, 1973 resigned and advised the Governor to dissolve the Assembly.

Around 9.00 a. m. on that day, Biju Patnaik claimed his majority in the assembly and urged the governor to invite him to form an alternative government. In order to back up his claim of having majority, at noon his supporters appeared as a group before the governor at Raj Bhavan. Thus, the resolution of the states' political crisis hung upon the corridors of Raj Bhavan.

Although the governor was convinced of the claim of the Pragati Party to a majority of seats, he expressed doubts about its "stability". Consequently, he recommended to the federal government the dissolution of the assembly and the imposition of the president's rule under Article 356 of the Constitution. In his formal report to the President of India, the governor said :

"Members of the present Porajati Legislature Pragislature Party belong to different parties having political ideologies. In my view, the Governor formed by such a party may not be stable.... It will be better to obtain a fresh mandate from the people.[14] On March[3]' 1973 a formal proclamation of a state emergency in Orissa was issued in New Delhi which dissolved the state

legislature and authorised the Governor to take over the state administration.

Gubernatorial Politics

It was evident that Jatti acted in a partisan manner in not giving a chance to the opposition leader to form government, especially after the latter convincingly demonstrated his majority support. In order to know why he did it, we have to go back to his past and analyse his personality. Jatti, after having lost his ground in his home politics of Karnataka[15], was rehabilitated in power by Mrs Gandhi when she first appointed him as the Lieutenant Governor of Pondicherry in 1958 and then as the Governor of Orissa in 1972. Thus Jatti's support to the Congress (R) in Orissa was probably motivated by his loyalty to Mrs Gandhi whom he had supported at the time of the 'Congress Split' in 1969 while his opponents in Karnataka, S. Nijalingappa and Virendra Patil, had thrown their weight behind the Congress (O). Moreover, Jatti who was for some time the Chief Minister of Karnataka, perhaps did not cease to be a Congressman even after he became a Governor. Though it was unethical, he did not hesitate to help the Congress (R) by his controversial action stated above. He apparently tried to live upto the "expectations" of the Congrees (R) people whom he had identified himself.

After enjoying a long period of real power and authority in his home state, Jatti had developed a political personality that could not reconcile with the ceremonial position of a governor. Thus, in addition to helping Mrs Gandhi's party, the governor perhaps wanted an opportunity to enjoy real power and authority. The long federal rule in the state in 1973 provided him with that opportunity.

Besides, uprooted as he was from his state politics, Jatti had private ambitions to higher political office. His partisan role during the presidential rule in the state was adequately rewarded by the ruling party in charge of the federal government. In August, 1974, he was elevated to the office of Vice-President of the Indian Republic.[16]

The 1976 Emergency

The Second Congress (R) Party government of Nandini Satpathy

which took over the state administration from Governor Jatti on 6th March, 1974 remained in office for little over half of its five-year term. It fell on 16th December 1976 as a result of a severe intraparty conflict. On the same day, for the fourth time, Orissa was brought under a brief spell of central rule. However, unlike the other three previous emergencies, the state assembly during this 1976 emergency was kept under suspension in order to provide a breathing space to the state Congress Party to set its house in order. On 29th December, 1976 the central rule was withdrawn and another Congress Party government headed by Binayak Acharya was installed in office. Thus, Nandini's failure to hold the party together not only cost her the chief ministership twice. It also deprived the state of a representative government for 381 days.

Although the strict press censorship mede the charge unverifiable, it was widely rumoured that Sanjay Gandhi strongly supported the cause of the Orissa Congress Party dissidents to oust Mrs. Satapathy from the chief ministership. With the approval of his mother, he finally succeeded in securing the resignation of a reluctant Satpathy.

Governor's Role

The 1976 state emergency in Orissa was promulgated during the period of Mrs. Gandhi's national emergency. Because of press censorship and imprisonment of opposition leaders, there was hardly any challenge to the ruling Congress Party in the state. However, the efforts of the party dissidents to oust Nandini from power and her reluctance to step down created a crisis in the government. The crisis was finally resolved when the chief minister was forced to resign under the threat of dismissal by the governor.

Chief Justice S. N. Shankar of the Orissa High Court, who was then acting governor of the state, played his role in accordance with the wishes of the federal government, particularly Sanjay Gandhi. During the interviews conducted for this study it was discovered that the governor was summoned to New Delhi by Sanjay Gandhi to discuss the Orissa affair. He was asked to dismiss the chief minister for her defiance of the Youth Congress's

directive to resign. Since whatever Mr. Gandhi said or did had apparently the sanctions of his mother, he was hardly opposed by any federal functionary. A careerist federal judge, Justice Shankar carried out Mr. Gandhi's orders. On December, 16th 1976 he gave an ultimatum to the chief minister either to resign by the same evening or to face dismissal. The chief minister chose the former and resigned at 6.25 p. m. A presidential proclamation of a state emergency was issued in New Delhi the same evening. As desired by the Youth Congress wing of the party, the state assembly was kept in suspension in order to give it a chance to choose a new chief minister for the state. With the blessings of Sanjay, the leader of the party rebels against Satpathy, Binayak Acharya, was sworn in as the chief minister on December 29th, 1978.

Thus, Sanjay Gandhi became a party both to the creation of and the resolution of the political crisis in the state. The governor complied with his wishes and did whatever was necessary to legitimize the federal action. The opposition parties who had earlier branded Mrs Gandhi's national emergency as the "Indira Emergency" described the 1976 emergency in Orissa as the "Sanjay Emergency".

The 1977 Emergency

After Janata came to power at the Centre with thumping majority in March, 1977, it could not resist the temptation of dislodging the governments in the states ruled by the Congress (R). To legitimize its design, the Centre took the plea that on the basis of the results of the Lok Sabha decision, those Congress (R) governments did not deserve to continue, because they had lost the confidence of the people. On April 30, 1977, those governments including the government in Orissa were dismissed by the Centre under Article 356. Unlike in the past the Centre did not seek reports from the governors concerned because of its fear that, being Mrs Gandhi's appointees, they would not oblige.

However, this partisan use of the instrument of presidential rule was not resented by Governor Brar. On the contrary, he supported it by assuming the responsibility of running the state administration during the entire period of the central rule.[17]

When asked why he did not protest about such central interference in his state, Governor Brar replied that after assuming his present position he had chosen to remain above party politics.

> As governor, I have to go by the Constitution. I carried on my duties as the head of government during the period of central rule. There was no room to do otherwise (to protest) as I have taken the oath to "preserve, protect and defend the constitution"[18].

Conclusions

Within a broad framework of the evolution of federal-state relations in India during 1950-79, this paper has focussed on the role of the federally appointed governors of Orissa. The circumstances leading to the imposition of each of the five emergencies in the state were briefly stated in order to examine the role of the federal government and its representatives, the governor, in these political crises. Did the federal government act according to the assurances given in the Constituent Assembly that "Article 356 will remain as a dead letter except in grave emergency" ? Did the governors follow the established parliamentary convention of political neutrality in deciding whether or not to recommend federal interference in the political crises of the state ?

The analysis shows that neither the federal government nor the governors appointed by it have played their role in strict conformity with the letters and conventions of the Constitution or the assurances given in the Constituent Assembly. While the framers of the Constitution had expected that the instrument of presidential rule under Article 356 would be used only to check the separatist forces and promote the country's unity, it was used in Orissa on each occasion to consolidate and further the interests of the ruling party at the federal level. Since Orissa was never a threat to the unity or security of the country, one can safely state that not one of the emergencies in the state was justified.

It should be recalled here that during the framing of the Constitution there was no certainty that the federal units (States

and Union Territories) which were constituted primarily on linguistic consideration and other cultural and religious communities would be able to live and work in harmony. Good intentions on the part of different groups were not enough; it was necessary to resort to a degree of compulsion to mould them together. It was therefore felt necessary to arm the federal government with ample powers to counteract divisive tendencies. Thus, in the misuse of the otherwise well-intentioned Article 356 federal compulsion is in evidence.

Second, excluding the first ten years (1950-60) of the operation of the present constitution during which Delhi-Bhubaneswar relations were cordial and the functions of the Orissa governors mostly ceremonial, the politics in Orissa tended to be highly unstable. The lack of tolerance of the ruling party at the federal level toward the opposition party governments of the state perhaps was the most significant reason for these instabilities. The action of the federal government that could be termed the most anti-federal in character was its use of the governors to manipulate the politics of the state to its own advantage. The governors, in turn, paid scant regard to the rules of a parliamentary democracy. They apparently felt obliged to come to the aid of the party in power at the federal level to whom they owed their status. Based on the preceding analysis of the role of the governors during Orissa's five emergencies, it is not an overstatement to say that they have acted more as the agents of the particular ruling party of the federal government than as impartial constitutional heads of state. The image of the federal government that emerges in this study is that of a meddler and the role of its appointed governors may be described at best as partisan.

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2. For example, see Sri Prakasa, *State Governors in India* (Meerut : Meenakshi Prakashan 1966), J. R. Siwach, *The Office of the Governor-A Critical Analysis* (New Delhi : Sterling, 1977) and B. D. Dua, *Presidential Rule in India, 1950-1974* (New Delhi, S. Chand and Company, 1979).
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4. The scholars who advocated a consensual model of the Indian polity were W. H. Morris-Jones and Rajani Kothari. See W. H. Morris-Jones, *The Government and Politics of India* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1967 : and "Rajani Kothari, India, Opposition in a Consensual Polity" in Robert A. Dahl, ed. *Regimes and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).
5. Out of the twenty instances of presidential rule imposed on the states between 1950-71, eleven occurred during 1967-71.
6. Out of a total number of 2,757, seats in the legislatures Mrs. Gandhi's party captured 1,936. S. R. Maheswari, *President's Rule in India* (Delhi: The Macmillan Company of India' Ltd. 1977), p.23.
7. Times of India, 2 May, 1977, p. 3.
8. Governor Dharm Vira's role in getting rid of West Bengal's leftist government in 1967 is a case in point. The governor converted the Raj Bhavan into a venue for Mrs. Gandhi's Congressmen who planned strategies for the dismissal of Ajoy Mukherjee's government. He also held discussions with the army, police and senior civil servants at Raj Bhavan at the back of his cabinet.

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9. Dr. Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Constitution, for example, had assured the critics of Article 356 that "it will remain a dead letter except in grave emergency situations, See M. V. Pylee, *Constitutional Government* in India (Bombay : Asia Publishing House, 1965), p, 643.
10 " the coalition should be dissolved at least 8 to 10 months before the general election, and the Chief Minister be requested to approach the governor for President's rule." *Lok Sabha Debates*, March 8, 1961
11. For details concerning the circumstances under which Biju Patnaik and his followers quit the Congress (R) Party, see B. D. Dua, *Presidential Rule in India* (New Delhi: S. Chand & Company, 1979), pp. 298-300.
12. *Asian Recorder*, 29 January 1971, p. 9984
13. Dua, n. 11, p. 624
14. The whole letter of the governor is quoted in Nanda, *Coalitional politics*, pp. 313-319.
15. For details regarding the political career of Jatti in Karnatak see Iqbal Narain, ed., *State politics in India* 2d ed. (Meerut : Meenakshi Prakashan, 1975), p. 135.
16. The interviews conducted for this study revealed that during Jatti's administration the leaders of the state branch of the Congress (R) Party enjoyed tremendous influence in the state government without being in formal power. This opportunity gave the party a moral boost to face the electorate in the 1974 midtern state assembly elections. Consequently, it secured sixty nine seats as against forty nine in the 1971 midterm poll. Even though the party fell short of the required majority to form a government, its leader, Mrs. Satpathy, was invited to form a government by Governor Jatti on the basis of her claim that see had the support of the Communist Party.
17. It may be mentioned here that of the nine affected states, only the governor of the State of Bihar resigned in protest against such undemocratic and partisan use of Article 356.
18. Interview with author July 11, 1977, at Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

10

CHIEF MINISTER
STRUCTURE AND TENSION AREAS IN ORISSA

Jagadish Kumar Patnaik

Of the numerous structures of the Indian federal system, the office of chief minister occupies a typically unique place. Although analogous to that of the prime minister's position in the federation, the chief minister is delicately placed with numerous currents of state structure interacting and regulating in its functioning to fit into the regional needs and aspirations. Over the years, since the days of independence, this office has witnessed a considerable change in stature and dimension; with the political process getting mature and sub-regional cultures becoming pronounced as well as politics being polarised, we witness a new kind of structure emerging in the office of the chief minister. This paper is an attempt at constructing a typological dimension of the structure along with the tension areas of different chief ministers as well as the functional dynamics from the context of political corruption in Orissa.

Typology

From the array of the different kinds and styles of political leadership as are found in various states, we may attempt at constructing a typology of the chief ministers in India in general.

Situational Dynamics

At first, since the situational dynamics regulate the behaviour of the chief minister, taking into consideration the party affiliation of the chief minister, we can categorize them into four broad types; (*a*) Pro-Centrist (*b*) Peri-Centrist (*c*) Anti-Centrist (*d*) Pacifist.

PRO-CENTRIST : A pro-Centrist chief minister is one who has the same party both at the state as well as at the centre. The homogenous party position at both the places accords the chief

minister a status of showmanship in that he enjoys the support of the central party high command including the prime minister.[1] Being the leader of the state party hierarchy the chief minister enjoys a free hand in implementing the central government's programmes and policies. Secondly, in regard to resource allocation, the chief minister may impress upon the central leadership by virtue of his proximity with them and help appropriate handsome amount of resources for the state, and in the process gain some popularity and strength inside his state[2]. Thirdly, with the blessings of the centre, the chief minister may use his power in administering and controlling the senior errant members of the party and the cabinet by punishing them; this we do not find in the case of a chief minister representing an opposition party excepting under exceptional circumstances where he is a charismatic type leader.[3] Fourthly, since the chief minister finds a friend in the Governor the conduct of state administration becomes smoother and matters of complicacies are sorted out by way of understanding and through central directives. Fifthly, as we find the entire activity of the chief minister of this kind is guided and regulated by his equation with the central leadership, so also we witness his fate impinging upon the prime minister exclusively, howsoever powerful and dynamic he may be.[4] Thus, a pro-centrist chief minister acts fully in compliance with the central leaders' instructions and activities.

PERI-CENTRIST : The chief minister of a state whose party is in alliance with the party at the centre may be known as Peri-Centrist. 'The All India Anna-D. M. K's connection with the ruling Congress Party at the Centre demonstrates the example of peri-centrist chief minister operating in Tamil Nadu. In this kind of relationship the chief minister, while pursuing the regional aspirations of the state by implementing the party manifesto, supports the central government in its functioning. By virtue of the majority and massive mandate bestowed upon him by the electorate his position is indomitable, and so does not have any inkling with the centre. However, under exceptional circumstances where the central party upsets the applecart of majority by adopting nefarious manouvering tactics, the chief minister may lose his seat;[5] but a charismatic leader with mass appeal in his state is too secure to be ousted by any kind of politiking. Secon-

dly, from the side of the Governor, the chief minister need not worry as his activities do not stand in the way of the centre nor does it contravene the interests of central ruling party. Thirdly, because of the alliance, the central ruling party guards the regional sentiments carefully in allocating resources etc, and this helps the chief minister to increase respect and strengthen support base more from the people as well as from his colleauges. In fact, he functions as the captain of the state.

ANTI-CENTRIST : An anti-centrist chief minister is one where the state is ruled by a single majority party and does not have any truck with the party ruling at centre. This is the consequence of the recent spate of attempts at invoking regional sentiments to counter the onslaught of the centre over the autonomy of the federating units. The emergence on the national scene of the leftist and regional political parties advocating greater state autonomy has contributed in the making of this kind of chief minister. These kinds of chief ministers are generally the chief spokesmen of their respective states and they act as chieftains; they are vociferous and outright in denigrating the central governments' activities; but interestingly enough, given a chance to rule at the centre, they are more likely to perform the same type of actions as is being done at present.

As regards the position, the massive support they have behind their back enables the anti-centrist chief ministers to be active and function efficiently. The rise to power of such chief ministers is mainly due to popular resentment against the central ruling party's inactivity; and they are expected to be belligerent and aggressive at various national for a such as N. D. C. and Planning Commission etc. Secondly, their position is less likely to be disturbed by any politiking; and if attempted to disturb their position, the spill over would be out of proportions. The actions taken by Ram Lal in removing Mr. N. T. Rama Rao and appointing Mr. Bhaskar Rao received so much of public resentment and furore in the state of Andhra Pradesh that the Governor had to quit his office and Mr. Rama Rao had to be reinstated by the new Governor, Mr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, immediately. Thirdly, in regard to resource allocation they indulge in hard bargaining tactics to get more funds for their states. Fourthly, inside the state and the cabinet their leadership

is unchallengable, as it is based on charisma and popular appeal. The elder colleagues of the party are only second rank leaders or are too weak to offer any challenge to them.

Besides, in a state where the national opposition party is ruling, the chief minister is also likely to act as an anticentrist chief minister with all the ingredients in it as mentioned above.

PACIFIST : The chief minister of a coalition government, who is virtually a prisoner of circumstances, can be called as pacifist chief minister. His position is mainly dependent on the parties of coalition whom he coordinates by cajoling and coaxing them through his pacific nature. In cases where his party is ruling at the centre he may not face difficulty from the side of the Governor; but the Governor always takes advantage of the fluid nature of politics available in the state to make use of his discretionary powers. The state legislature is also a hurdle for the chief minister in the conduct of legislative functions; utmost restrained behaviour is the hallmark of this type of chief minister. The sagacity and ingenuity of the person concerned greatly contributes to the survival of this kind of chief minister.

Functional Dynamics

From the context of the functions performed by the chief minister, the office may be categorized into three broad types : (1) Activist (2) Passivist (3) Moderate.

ACTIVIST : A Chief Minister can become an activist mianly in a state where the political climate is stable and the support enjoyed by him is massive. But in spite of this kind of political environment some chief ministers may not be activists due to personal factors. An activist chief minister may be an able administrator, a dynamic politician, a statesman and a charismatic leader. The level of activeness of the chief minister can be judged from the mobilization of resources, the state of law and order inside the state and the type of his relationship with the centre. These are the people with aggressive postures in undertaking new approaches and ventures in decision-making as well as adopting risk-involving programmes. However, the price that they generally pay for taking rdiacal and progressive decisions is too heavy even to the extent of taking a toll on their ministry.

PASSIVIST : In a coalition form of government the chief ministers are of a passivist type in their functioning, for it is an arrangement to share power rather than perform functions. Decisions precariously hang on the support of the partners of coalition. Even if intelligent and clever chief ministers control the errant partners, in terms of output, there is very little notable work being done by the government. In a massively supported majority also the chief minister may become passive when he owes his credentials to the centre and acts as a puppet of the central ruling party. These chief ministers do not have any base in their states excepting their seniority in national politics. There are also situations when there is a slender lead of majority of the ministry in the house and the political currents such as dissidence and factionalism are rife, the chief minister may become a passivist one by getting himself entangled in the politics of power struggle. The chief minister of the minority government is the best example of the passivist type model. Generally, the tenure of the passivist chief minister is very small.

MODERATE : This kind of political actor is the middle-path type, mostly found in various states of India at present. Moderate chief ministers generally have a long tenure of service. Their actions are characterised by beaten-track methods and they do not adopt any radical postures. More intent to implement the policy and programmes of the party, they are determined to consolidate the support structures as all levels, inside the legislature, in the cabinet and with the electorate. In the cases where the same party is ruling at the centre, the moderate chief minister would keep the high command in good humour and control the dissident elements by invoking whips from the centre. Moderate chief ministers may also be found more in peri-centrist type of situations where the party ruling in the state is having an alliance with the ruling party at the centre. Accomodation, toleration and expediency are the hall-marks of this kind of chief minister. In fact, this kind of chief minister is conducive to the functioning of the federal system in Indian conditions.

Orissan Politics

A study of the office of chief minister of Orissa right from its

inception down to the present times provides a glimpse of an important political functionary in the Indian federal process. The Orissan Chief Minister not only serves as touch-stone of political development in a backward state but demonstrates amply the process of politics in a third world situation political instability, which has been the characteristic pattern of political development in its transitory stage has been haunting Orissan politics since independence, and the office of chief minister has been plagued by such extraneous elements. Nevertheless, as is wont with any other state in India, the Orissan chief minister represents the true picture of the emerging political culture of independent India.

TENSION AREAS OF DIFFERENT CHIEF MINISTERS : Although the state politics of Orissa has been infested with factionalism, dissidence and defection influencing the activities of various chief ministers, the tension areas for the chief minister are five only: (a) Cabinet management (b) Legislative management (c) Governor (d) Party management and (e) Electorate/ Public Opinion. His position has been determined by the style of functioning and approach of handling these tension areas.

Since the beginning, the office of chief minister has been subjected to factional politics which spawned tension in directly all areas of the structure. Such popular leaders like Harekrushna Mahatab were not free from internal opposition. He had to tactfully induct Nityananda Kanungo in his ministry in order to break the alliance between Gopabandhu Choudhury and Nityananda Kanungo who were working against him. Mahatab had exercised his influence in the power struggle between his successor Mr. N.K. Choudhury and B. N. Das after he (Mahatab) accepted Nehru's offer to join the Central cabinet. Despite dissidence and factionalism during Mahatab's tenure, he was the activist type of chief minister. In the context of situational dynamics, he was a pro-centrist in that he was a close confidant of Nehru which is evident from his appointment as a Central minister. A master manipulator, and very good administrator, Mr. Mahatab is an activist.

After the first adult franchise and Mahatab's shift from state politics, N. K. Choudhury, though occupied the chief minister's office, was a victim of the Mahatab clique as well as his own

personal inefficiency of administration. In terms of resource mobilization his ministry failed in implementing first five year plan; several crores of rupees lapsed every year as his ministers were engaged in personal works. Relief grants worth about seventy percent could not be spent in the year of floods. Having engaged himself and the entire administration in the Bhoodan Movement and by spending huge amounts on Angul ashram run by Mrs. Choudhury, the chief minister was not only the target of criticism but became a true passivist chief minister of the typology mentioned above.

Added to inefficiency, the restiveness of Mahatab in the Gubernatorial assignment in Bombay and his pulling of strings through his supporters in the state further weakened the survival of Mr. Choudhury's ministry in office. During a visit of the congress President, Mr. Dhebar, to Orissa in Jan. 1956, a number of congress leaders of the Mahatab clique represented that unless the leadership was changed there was no possibility of Congress winning the election in 1957. Although the central congress leadership including Nehru had still high hopes, who tried to persuade Choudhury not to quit, Mr. Choudhury, being disgusted by the groupism and crude politiking of Mahatab resigned from the office as well as the Congress on October 18, 1956.

The second term of Mahatab's tenure as chief minister witnessed intense politiking and furious horse-trading in cabinet management.[5] The thin and uncertain majority after the Second General Election[6] and the vehement opposition by anti-Mahatabites made the task of cabinet management very difficult for Mahatab. The main actors in pulling strings were Biren Mitra and Dinabandhu Sahu; while the former could not get a berth in the cabinet, the latter being inside the cabinet did not oblige the chief minister in granting a mining lease to a leading mines owner, allegedly favoured by the chief minister and who later was granted lease by the chief minister himself. Sahu, however could not continue any longer in the cabinet. Inside the legislature, the ministry had nearly escaped a cut-motion moved by Mr. Hari Hara Das of C. P. I. by a slender margin of just one vote.[7]

The dwindling majority behind Mahatab's ministry and the

hectic political activity by opposition leaders resulted in the formation of a coalition government in 1959 with Mahatab as the chief minister and R. N. Singh Deo of the Ganatantra Parishad as the deputy chief minister. Within a month of the formation of the cabinet, the relations between the coalition partners, Congress and G. Parishad, became strained over the question of ratio of ministers in the cabinet.[8] Secondly, over the question of inclusion of Himansu Sekhar Padhy of Phulbani in the cabinet, who defected from Parishad before the poll and won the election with Congress ticket, there arose some controversy. Besides this, suspicion, jeolousy and distrust within the ranks of the Congress further weakened not only the ministry. It even paved the way for the dissolution of the house calling for a mid-term poll in 1961.

With a massive mandate in the 1961 mid-term poll Biju Patnaik took over as the chief minister and Biren Mitra as the Deputy. Though Mr. Patnaik continued in office for a short span[10] he proved to be remarkably active as a chief minister in giving a new lease of life to Orissan politics. By way of consolidating the Congress party, he brought stability to Orissan Politics, and by means of his progressive and dynamic measures he brought prosperity to Orissa.[11] During his tenure he heralded a new era by undertaking some giant industrial projects in the State.

Following the resignation of Biju Patnaik, his deputy, Biren Mitra, took over as the chief minister after winning a fight for succession[12] with Pabitra Mohan Pradhan with a high margin. The tenure (1963 Oct–1965 Feb) of Mr. Mitra assumed a demogogueic and populist dimension involving lax administration and ineffective handling of problems of the State,[13] of the cabinet, inside legislature and the party. This was mainly due to his mentor Biju Patnaik who was acting as "Super Chief Minister" by being the Chairman of Orissa Planning Board, for which reason Mr. Mitra functioned as a passivist type of chief minister with all its manifested characteristics.

With Mr. Patnaik's sway continuing inside the state and party, the next man in was Mr. Sadasiva Tripathy who lasted upto the 1967 General Election. Despite dissidence, allegedly engineered by Mr. Patnaik himself to enable his own return to power, Mr. Tripathy survived in office with the support of the Congress

High Command and the Prime Minister. But his ailing health and intra-party bickerings failed him as a successful chief minister; and so he also conforms to the passivist type.

The 1967 General Election witnessed the onset of coalition politics in India in general and in Orissa in particular. Two opposition parties, Swatantra and Jana Congress, formed the coalition ministry under the leadership of R. N. Singdeo. At the initial stage there was some cohesion between the two coalition partners as their actions were directed against the Congress leaders for that reason the government appointed Khanna Commission of Inquiry to probe into the charges of corruption against Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra and Nilomani Routray. Later Mr. Singhdeo, though an able administrator, was constrained by the inconsistency of its coalition partner, Jana Congress which was affiliated with personality clashes between the Mahatab and Pradhan factions. Also, Mr. Singhdeo had instituted a Commission of Inquiry for corruption charges against Mahatab. That ultimately brought the liquidation of the ministry. With the request of the Jana Congress leaders to the Governor to dsimiss the Singhdeo ministry, which was reluctant to resign despite loss of majority, the Governor had asked the chief minister to resign immediately without even allowing him to act as care-taker chief minister. Such an act of the Governor had created an administrative vaccuum for two days in Orissa with neither President's Rule nor chief minister's rule for which he had been severely criticised. Mr. Singhdeo, however, exhibited the characteristics of a moderate chief minister.

The era of coalition as heralded in the 1967 election also paraded in the 1971 election in which no party obtained a clear majority. A post-electoral coalition of Swatantra, Utkal-Congress and Jharkhand Party under the leadership of a non-Congress chief minister, Mr. Biswanath Das, formed the ministry. The in-built structural deficiencies of coalition with the resultant defection politics had made the Das government emaciated, and he became a passivist in terms of functional output of his government. In June 1972, the ministry collapsed as the Utkal Congress wanted to rejoin the Congress Party and ten Swatantra members crossed the floor to join the Congress. This opened an opportunity for Mrs. Nandini

Satapathy, who had the blessings of the Congress High Command to stake her claim to form the ministry. But again defections destabilised the government, and Mrs. Nandini Satapathy's ministry fell down in Feb, 1973 following the walkout of 25 members of Congress to join the Pragati Party.

After the Satapathy ministry resigned, even though Mr. Biju Patnaik staked his claim to form the ministry with the help of his Pragati Party, the Governor Jatti dissolved the house on the plea that he was not convinced of Mr. Patnaik's claim that he commanded the support of the majority in the House. The action of the Governor came up for severe criticism and when the issue was referred to the High Court of Orissa by Mr. Patnaik though it was dismissed, the court commented that the established convention had not been followed by the Governor in Mr. Patnaik's case.

However, the political instability in the state as manifested in the successive elections came to a halt in the 1974 mid-term election. Mrs. Nandini Satapathy managed to wrest a convincing majority for her party and formed the ministry with the support of seven communist members with whom the Congress had an electoral alliance. During her tenure as chief minister for two years, Mrs. Satapathy functioned effectively in handling the problems of the state. An activist and pro-centrist as she was, Mrs. Satapathy was also not free from the virus of factionalism of the Congress Party which cost her dearly, including her office. She had to lay down office under forceful circumstances in which her own supporters went against her. Binayak Acharya, who was elected as the new leader unanimously in the presence of AICC General Secretary A. R. Antulay, assumed office at a critical phase of Indian politics, that is, at the fag end of the emergency period. His was the shortest tenure as the chief minister of Orissa spanning only about four months.

As the national politics was undergoing a cataclysmic change, its dent on Orissan politics, and for that matter, on the office of chief minister, could be felt when the call for elections to the 9 states including Orissa was given by the Janata Party at the Centre in 1977. In the elections the Janata Party was victorious in Orissa with a mammoth mandate of 110 seats, and Mr. Nilomani Routray became the chief minister of the state.

Mr. Routroy had the confidence of Central Party High Command as well as the massive support of the members in the legislature. Besides that, his past experience in various capacities and the unflinching support he was enjoying from his parton, Mr. Biju Patnaik, who was a Central Minister at that time, helped him to run the ministry smoothly. However, the unprecedented erosion of support resulting from the internal squabbles of the Janata Party at the Centre not only caused sudden cracks in his ministry, but it also changed the complexion of the political process both at the national and state levels.[14]

In the 1980 Assembly election, the Congress gained a massive mandate and assumed office under the leadership of J. B. Patnaik. In spite of dissidence and factionalism Mr. Patnaik's deft handling of the erratic Orissan politics by giving it stability, demonstrates his capability as well as marksmanship. Such senior and experienced persons like Shyam Sunder Mohapatra, K. C. Lenka, could be relegated by his intelligent political skill, and as much an influential firebrand as Ram Rath was restrained by his moves in the Central Working Committee. He is the only chief minister who has successfully completed his term of five years fully and is still continuing in office for the second term.

With regard to Cabinet management, Mr. Patnaik was able to eliminate one of the self-aggrandized members[15] by denying him ticket for the second term by impressing upon the High Command about the (clean-) image of the person concerned. Even if Mr. Patnaik has the Support of central leadership behind him, he has been successful enough in holding the reins for such a long duration because his is a moderate type chief minister's functioning which ensures longer tenure and successful administration.

POLITICAL CORRUPTION AND SOME ORISSAN CHIEF MINISTERS : While political corruption is an aberration in the civilized world, it is ubiquitous and more so in the developing system of the Third World Societies. It includes all official misconduct and "deviates from the norm actually prevailing or believed to prevail in the given context such as political".[16] Such deviant behaviour contributing to private gain and contravening "Public interest" or "Public opinion" violates a country's legal

system.[17] It also endangers the survival of the democratic system. However, to Huntington it is the product of rapid social and economic modernisation[18] which is the *sine quo non* of democracy.

Orissan government and politics, which is experiencing the strains of modernisation, *pari passu* the national front, is not immune from political corruption. The office of chief minister being the highest political office of the state could not afford to remain at bay from political corruption. Although all chief ministers have not indulged in political corruption, some have been alleged with corruption charges. The chief ministers against whom charges of corruption have been levelled, and who have been found guilty of misconduct by the various inquiry commissions set up by the Government of Orissa at different times are Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra, R. N. Singdeo, H. K. Mahatab and Nandini Satapathy. A close look at the various commissions' findings reveal the extent of corruption done by the different chief ministers.

Khanna Commission : The government of Orissa on 26th October 1967, appointed Justice H. R. Khanna, a former judge of Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court of India to inquire into the corruption charges against Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra and Nilomani Routray under section 3 of the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952. The Commission of Inquiry *inter alia,* took exception to the transfer of Kalinga Iron Works[19] to the Industrial Development Corporation of Orissa and the purchase of Tubular Trusses from Kalinga Industries worth Rs. 16,05,250. With regard to the first deal Justice Khanna observed that "the existing plant was found to be uneconomical and the expansion required an amount which was much beyond the resources of Kalinga Industries"[20]. In such a situation by virtue of his official authority Biju Patnaik thought it wise to "gift away on the head of the government at a fabulous price"[21]. The second deal involved dubious transactions in inviting tenders for the purchase of 2500 units of trusses for Paradeep Port and Orissa Mining Corporation from the Company in which the chief minister's family members had direct interest.

Justice Khanna had also not overlooked the activities of Biren Mitra who was also involved in acts of "administrative impro-

prieties and abused their power". He had also pointed out that "if Patnaik felt no compunction in allowing the concerns, with which he and his family members were associated, to enter into major contracts with the State Government, Mitra likewise had no such hesitation". It seems amply clear that these two political actors performed their functions for the furtherance of their personal interest rather than public good.

Sarjoo Prasad Commission : This Commission probed into the charges of corruption against Hare Krushna Mahatab during his tenure as chief minister. According to the Commission, Mahatab was found guilty in granting remission to Kendu Leaf Contractors which caused loss to the State revenue, besides his alleged favouritism towards one Serajuddin[22] in granting him lease of Chromite mines even forgetting/undermining the states interest. The Commission also felt that Mahatab's wealth was far more disproportionate to his source of income which implied unethical and illegal method of appropriating money during his chief ministership.

Mitter Commission : The Government of Orissa appointed G. N. Mitter, a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India to inquire into the allegations against R. N. Singdeo and some of his colleagues. The causes of the case against Mr. Singhdeo were acts of illegal, improper and malafide intentions and abuse of power by him during his chief ministership, in the matter of grant of renewal of agreement in favour of Kendu leaf Agents and Purchasers for the year 1972, and in the matter of granting rebate, Commission and exemptions during the period from 1st April 1971 to 31st march, 1972 in favour of Kendu leaf traders and purchasers. The Commission held Mr. Singhdeo guilty of having affected the resources of the State to the tune of Rs. 40 laks due to his misconduct of unjustified and improper orders. It also admitted that the said orders were not bonafide as they were made without any jurisdiction.

Das Commission : Mr. Binayak Acharya who became chief minister after the exit of Mrs. Satapathy appointed the Rajkishore Das Commission of inquiry on the basis of allegations made by the former Orissa Governor Mr. Akber Ali Khan and some of the members of the dissolved Lok Sabha. Mr. Justice Das, who had been appointed to inquire into the *prima facie* of

the eight allegations against Mrs. Satapathy, submitted his report in respect of four of the charges on 5th September 1977[23]. The subject matter of the two cases of which state vigilance department registered[24] had not been referred to by the Commission. The Orissa Government directed the State Vigilance and the concerned administrative department to take "appropriate follow-up action" on the report of Mr. Justice Das. While Mrs. Satapathy was facing the Commission of Inquiry, and on a preliminary finding she had been held guilty on four charges, cases were also pending against her in the courts against Prevention of Corruption Act. However, after the Congress Ministry of J. B. Patnaik assumed office, the Government decided on 15.6.1980 to withdraw all the cases against Mrs. Satapathy as soon as possible.

Thus, although the findings of the Inquiry Commission and the Vigilance Department were circumvented by inadequate and deliberate inactivity of the government it amply exposes the spectre of political corruption plaguing the office of the chief minister in Orissa and for that matter in India. Political corruption not only pollutes the state apparatus it definitely wrecks the healthy functioning of the chief minister.

Conclusion

In consonance with the process of political development affected at the national level, the politics of Orissan sub system represents a truly Indian model; and the office of chief minister is no exception. Though the office of chief minister of Orissa has been subjected to numerous currents of regional and notional politics, it has its own uniqueness responding to the needs of the state.

Firstly, until recent years, *i.e.* upto 1977, the office of chief minister in Orissa has been affected with the stigma of instability. Consequently, no chief minister had been able to complete the full tenure of 5 years. Secondly, though there were prominent leaders in the state, no one had been able to win the full confidence of the fellow legislators. This has been mainly due to lack of integrity and honesty in the leadership, as is evidenced in the findings of the various inquiry commissions. Political corruption roots out the efficacy of the leadership causing

erosion of support. The moment the legislators doubt the honesty and integrity of their leadership they immediately withdraw their support. For this reason in Orissa there had been constant change in the leadership of the state. In this connection, it is relevant to point out that inspite of his inactivity and administrative inefficiency, Naba Babu could continue for a relatively longer tenure because of his impeccable character and morality. Thirdly, the phenomena of dissidence, defection, and factionalism affecting most of the states and rampant in the developing political system desecrate the office of the chief minister who always finds it difficult to pull through by integrating the hetrogenous elements. In Orissa this type of situation became rife between the period immediate to pre and post coalition era, (1936-1977), during which seven chief ministers changed office and President's Rule was promulgated twice. Fourthly, although coalition government of R. N. Singhdeo could continue for a comfortable period of four years as he displayed remarkable administrative cepability in running the government by his ingenious technique of crisis management through the coordination committee of the coalition.

After the 1977 elections, there has been a significant change in the political graph of the state, as the electoral behaviour of the state complied with the tendencies of the national politics. With the greater political participation of the people in the state, the complexion of politics has been mature and the chief minister has been functioning effectively with the assurance of stability. For the first time in the history of Orissan politics the present chief minister Mr. J. B. Patnaik has been continuing in office even after the full completion of his first term. This amply demonstrates not only the maturity in politics but also the increasing ability of the leadership of the state in running the government. Thus the office of chief minister in Orissa is growing from strength to strength.

Notes and References

1. The respect and awe enjoyed by Mr. Biju Patnaik and Mrs. Nandini Satapathy during their tenure of chief ministership is a case in point.

2. Here again, we take the example of Biju Patnaik during whose tenure as chief minister, Orissa witnessed a giant-scale industrialisation process ushered in; so also during Mr. J. B. Patnaik's time. This has been due to the closeness with the prime minister.
3. We find exception in NTR's action in quashing the nefarious designs of Bhaskar Rao.
4. A strong chief minister like P. S. Kairon of Punjab had to go as prime minister Sastri took a very serious view of the stricture passed against him by the Das Commission; another strong chief minister like Kamlapati Tripathy had to quit as Mrs. Gandhi took an equally serious view of his incompetence in dealing the PAC revolt in 1973. Recently, A. R. Anthulay had to lay down office following a Bombay High Court stricture on him which Mrs. Gandhi took seriously.
5. Although, in Jammu and Kashmir, the National Conference had some electoral understanding with the Congress, Mr. Farooq Abdulla had been outmaneuvered by engineering a spilt in the party. This may be due to lack of charismatic appeal of Mr. Abdulla in the state unlike his father.
6. Mahatab formed his ministry with the support of 6 independent members and four members who defected from Ganatantra Parishad.
7. Of the 136 members only 125 took part in the voting and the ruling party managed to survive by 63 to 26. The CPI voted against the government.
8. The Congress held that the ratio should be 60:40. But it was not acceptable to Singhdeo who wanted it to be 50:50 barring the chief minister.
9. The Congress had gained a single victory by capturing 82 seats in a house of 140 polling nearly 40 percent of total votes. The partywise break up of 1961 poll was : Congress-82, Ganatantra Parishad-37, P. S. P.-10, Communists-4 and Independents-7.
10. Mr. Patnaik resigned from the government under the Kamaraj Plan for engaging himself in making the party stronger.
11. During his tenure, the Government established the Indus-

trial Development Corporation, an organisation to cater to the industrial development by promoting, establishing and executing industries. See my M. Phil thesis (unpublished) Industrial Policy of the State of Orissa and its evaluation --A study in its Growth and Dimension, Berhampur University, for a detailed study of the industrial development of state.

12. At the Congress legislature party meeting held on Sept. 23 '63 with Hafiz Md. Ibrahim as observer, a secret ballot was taken in which, among 83 members, Mitra got 68 votes and Pradhan only 15 votes.
13. There was the law and order problem in the state with the student movement continuing for 53 days, drawing its sustenance from the opposition leaders and anti-Biju faction in the Congress. On July 28, 1964, a memorandum was submitted to the President of India by 13 opposition members of Assembly including the leader of opposition, Mr. Biju Patnaik and Biren Mitra, for personal gain.
14. The landslide victory of Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Congress at the General Election helped her to adopt the tactics of holding election in the states where non-Congress governments are operating while Congress candidates were returned in the M. P. election.
15. The self-aggrandisement of the minister was so much that he was called as super-chief-minister of the state.
16. G. Myrdal, *The Asian Drama : An inquiry into the poverty of Nations.* (Allen Lane and Penguine, Great Britian, 1968), p. 937
17 James C. Scott, *Comparative political Corruption.* (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1972), p. 4.
18. Samuel P. Huntington, (ed), *Political Corruption.* (Holt Rinehart and Winston Inc. New-York, 1970), p. 492.
19. Kalinga Iron Works was initially named as Kalinga Refrigerators Corporation Ltd. of which the Chairman of the Board of the Directors of the Company was Mr. Biju Patnaik.
20. *Khanna Commission of Inquiry,* Orissa Govt. Press, Cuttack, 1969, p. 124.
21. Indrajit Gupta, (CPI), Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. 39, No. 11, p. 4562.
22. Sarjoo Prasad, Report of the Orissa Inquiry Commission,

Orissa Government Press, Cuttack, 1972, p. 29.

23. The four cases on which Mr. Das had submitted the report included among other things :

(a) The financial loss caused to the state government by Mrs. Satapathy in connection with the lease given to certain forest areas for collection of sal seeds to a private. firm.

(b) the alleged undue favour shown to a tyre trading firm. A son of Mrs. Satapathy was connected with both of these firms.

(c) the alleged irregularity committed by promoting a former executive engineer of the public health department to the rank of Supertinendent engineer and

(d) in the appointment of a person as a Managing Director of a state-owned corporation.

24. The vigilance department had filed cases against Mrs. Satapathy under sections 406/409/420 I. P. C. and Sections 5 (2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act on the written information of corruption information of Mrs. S. S. Mohapatra, M. P,. The case was that she collected heavy amounts of money on the ground of publishing souvenier of the Congress and utilised the money worth 1,38,000/- by withdrawing it from the pass book credited for the name of the Chairman, Souvenier Committee and UPCC.

Appendix

LIST OF CHIEF-MINISTERS OF ORISSA SINCE 1952

1. Sri Nabakrushna Choudhury (Congress) — From May, 1952 to October 1956.
2. Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab (Congress) — From October, 1956 to April, '1957
3. Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab (Congress) — From April, 1957 to May, 1959.
4. Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab (Congress) (Coalition) — From May, 1959 to February, 1961.

PRESIDENT'S RULE. — From February, 1961 to June, 1961.

5.	Sri Bijaya Nanda Patnaik (Congress)	— From June, 1961 to Oct., 1963.
6.	Sri Biren Mitra (Congress)	— From October, 1963 to Feb., 1965.
7.	Sadasiva Tripathy (Congress)	— From Feb., 1965 to March, 1967.
8.	Sri Rajendranarayan Singdeo (Coalition).	— From March, 1967 to Jan., 1971.
	PRESIDENT'S RULE.	— From Jan, 1971 to April, 1971.
9.	Sri Biswanath Das (Coalition)	— From April, 1971 to June. 1972.
10.	Smt. Nandini Satapathy (Congress)	— From June, 1972 to March, 1973.
	PRESIDENT'S RULE.	— From March, 1973 to March, 1974.
11.	Smt. Nandini Satapathy (Congress)	— From March, 1974 to Dec, 1976.
	PRESIDENT'S RULE.	— From Dec., 1976 to Dec, 1976.
12.	Sri Binayak Acharya	— From Dec., 1976 to March, 1977.
13.	Sri Nilomani Routray (Janata)	— From April 1977 to May, 1980.
14.	Sri Janaki Ballav Patnaik (Congress)	— From May, 1980 continuing

11

THE STATE JUDICIARY

S. Panda

A tripartite system of Government arms the executive to administer the laws enacted by the legislature where the judiciary decides the validity of laws and their proper implementation. The judiciary is the machinery provided in a liberal constitution to check the undue exercise of power by the executive and the legislature. Civil and Criminal justice are the two wings of judiciary, the former relating to the private wrongs and the latter to public wrongs, where individual crime infringes the society in general. Different institutional structures administer civil and criminal suits and the punishments awarded may be preventive, deterrent or reformative. Apart from this in a federal form of Government, the function of judiciary extends to arbitration of disputes between the centre and the states *interse*. The judiciary also adjudicates upon claims made by the citizens against the states for the enforcement of fundamental rights.

The Indian constitution provides for an integrated judicial system where the Supreme Court stands at the apex of the judicial hierarchy. Ranking below it are High Courts in the states and subordinate judiciary.

Organisation of Judiciary in Orissa

The High Court stands at the apex of the judicial hierarchy in Orissa (Art. 214) having its territorial jurisdiction in the States of Orissa. Established in the year 1948, located in Cuttack, it has no separate bench inside the state as in Assam, Bihar, Bombay, M. P., Rajasthan and U.P. The High Court of Orissa consists of the Chief Justice and nine puisne judges At the time of inception the number of judges of the Orissa High Court were six which has been increased to ten subsequently.

The District and the Sessions Judge of a District Court is the highest judicial authority exercising both civil and criminal

jurisdiction, in the hierarchy of subordinate judiciary in a state. Art. 233, 234, 235, 237 of the constitution deal with the Subordinate Judiciary in a state. There may be one or more Additional District Judges in a district invested with equal powers with that of the District and Sessions Judge. Section 10 of the Criminal Procedure Code provides for appointment of a Magistrate (Ist Class) to be the District Magistrate (Executive) of a District; who is an I. A. S. officer, invested with revenue powers and is the Head of the Police and Executive Magistrate. Section 10 (z) provides for appointment of a Magistrate Ist Class, a senior O. J. S. officer designated as Chief Judicial Magistrate. He is the Asst. Sessions Judge appointed under Sec. 9 (z) of the Criminal Procedure Code by the State Government. The subordinate Judges appointed under Orissa Civil Courts Act, 1984, are Class I Officers of the Orissa Judicial Service having specified pecuniary jurisdiction. Their territorial jurisdiction is limited to certain Munsiffs. Cases under Land Acquisition Act, Copy Rights Act, Marriage Act, Guardianship Act are also tried by the Sub-judges. Munsif Court is the lowest court in the Civil Wing. The Munsif has territorial jurisdiction over certain police stations and pecuniary jurisdiction as defined from time to time.

Magistrates Ist and IInd Class are the lower ranking officers in the criminal side having power to pass sentence defined from time to time. The Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate is the officer in charge of a sub-division.

At the lowest rung of the judical hierarchy are the Adalati Panchayats set up under the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1948, disposing both civil and criminal cases in their territorial jurisdiction of the Gram Sasan in which they are constituted.

Organisation and Function of the High Court

The Judges of High Court are appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Governor of the State. For the appointment of other judges of the High Court, the President has to consult the Chief Justice of the High Court in addition to the above.

In order to be appointed as a judge of the High Court, (1) he must be a citizen of India, and (2) must have held a judicial

office in India for at least ten years or (3) must have been an advocate of a High Court or two or more courts for at least ten years. While computing the period during which he had been an advocate of a High Court any period during which he has held judicial office after he became an advocate shall also be included. Practice shows that District Judges having 10 years in office are selected for appointment. Once appointed, the judge of a High Court holds office till attaining the age of sixty two. A judge may however, relinquish office by (1) tendering resignation addressed to the President (2) removed by the President on an address of the Parliament which must be supported by 2/3 members present and voting on the ground of proved "misbehaviour" or "incapacity". (3) a judge also ceases to be a judge of the High Court on being appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court. (4) A vacancy is also created in case of his transfer from the High Court.

The Chief Justice of the High Court receives Rs 4000/- and other judges receive Rs. 3500/- per mensem, besides other allowances and rights of leave and pension as may be determined by the Parliament from time to time. The salary and allowances of the judges shall not be varied by the Parliament to his disadvantage except during financial emergency.

Jurisdiction

Art. 231 makes it expressly clear that the jurisdiction of a High Court extends to the territorial limitation of the state except where a common High Court is established for two or more states or the jurisdiction of a High Court is extended to a Union territory by the Parliament. By enacting the states Reorganisation Act 956, the Parliament has extended the jurisdiction of the High Court of Calcutta to Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Kerala High Court to Lakshadweep. The jurisdiction of the Orissa High Court is limited to the State of Orissa. Art. 225 however, States that any restriction on the Jurisdiction concerning Revenue which, existed prior to the commencement of the constitution have ceased to exist.

Original Jurisdiction

The High Court of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras have original

jurisdiction in (1) Civil cases, where the value exceeds Rs. 2000/- (2) Criminal Cases referred by the Presidency Magistrate, and (3) limited original jurisdiction pertaining to Admiralty, will, divorce, marriage, company law and contempt of Court. The original criminal jurisdiction of the High Courts have been withdrawn by the Criminal Procedure Code, 1974. The High Court also settles disputes relating to the election of members to the Union and State Legislatures. The High Court of Orissa has original jurisdiction in matters of admiralty, matrimony, elections, and contempt of court.

Appelate Jurisdiction

Appeals lie to the High Court in civil matter from :

(1) the decisions of the District judges and from the subordinate judges in cases of higher value;

(2) when case is decided by the District or subordinate judge on appeal from the decision of an inferior court, a second appeal will be entertained by the High Court on procedural matters only;

(3) under the letters patent of the Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Allahabad and Patna High Court appeals lie from the decision of a single judge of High Court.

Appeals in criminal matters lie to the High Court from the decisions of a Subordinate Court (1) Sessions Judge or Additional Sessions Judge where the sentence of imprisonment exceeds seven years, and (2) certain specified cases decided by the Sessions Judge or an Additional Sessions Judge.

Art. 226 of the Constitution empowers the High Court to issue writs not only for the protection of fundamental rights but "for any other purpose". Hence writs in the nature of *habeas corpus*, *mandamus*, prohibition, *quo warranto* and certiorary can be issued by the High Court which is wider than the Supreme Court as these writs can be issued by the High Court where an ordinary legal right has been infringed.

The High Court has the power of (1) Superintendence and control over courts subordinate to it, (2) to issue general rules to regulate their proceedings, (3) to call returns from subordinate courts, (4) withdrawing a case from the subordinate court and after deciding a substantial question of law sending it back, (5)

appointing staff and framing rules and regulations for service conditions.

The control of the High Court over the sub-ordinate courts is exercised in the matters of, (1) appointment of district judges when the court is consulted by the Governor, (2) The High Court is consulted alongwith the Public Service Commission of the States while appointing persons to the judicial services, (3) It also exercises control over district and subordinate courts by dealing with posting, promotion and sanction of leave.

Art. 215 empowers the High Court to call for records of any case from the subordinate Courts to be satisfied about the legality of orders passed. It is also a Court of record and has the power of punishing for contempt of itself.

The administrative Tribunals vested with quasi-judicial power, though they are not courts in the proper sense, decide questions which affect the rights of the individual and their decisions are binding on them. But these tribunals very often commit procedural mistakes for which they are placed under the control of the Superior Courts. Thus when the fundamental right of a person is infringed by the decision of a tribunal the aggrieved person may apply for a writ of certiorari to the Supreme Court under Art. 32 or High Court vide Art. 226. Art. 229 also vests the power of Superintendence both administrative and judicial over these tribunals.

By the Constitution 42nd Amendment Act 1976, the jurisdiction of the High Court was very much minimised. The jurisdiction of the Court under Art. 226 was curtailed by enumerating the grounds and purposes for which it is to bs exercised. The power of the High Court to decide the validity of a central law was withdrawn and the supervisory power over Administrative Tribunals was taken away.

But the Constitution 44th Amendment Act. 1978 restored the position by enabling the High Court to issue writs not only for enforcement of fundamental rights but for any other purpose. Similarly the right to determine the validity of a central law was also restored and control over Administrative Tribunals was guaranteed. However the jurisdiction of the High Court relating to service matters, taxation, foreign exchange, labour disputes, land reforms, election, essential goods, etc. which were with-

drawn by 42nd Amendment by Art. 323 A-B remains unaltered.

Subordinate Judiciary in Orissa—Appellate Courts (Civil)

The subordinate judiciary in the state consists of the District and Sessions Judge at the apex and the Munsif and Magistrate at the base. Appeals on civil cases lie to the sub-judge who is the first appellate authority and a class (I) officer of the Orissa Judicial Service, from the decree of the Munsif Court. The territorial jurisdiction of a Sub-judge comprise certain Munsifs. Section 22 (1) of the Bengal, Assam, Agra, and Agra civil courts Act 1887 (now Orissa civil courts Act) provides that a district judge may transfer any appeal that originally lies and pending before him to the sub-judge.

The second appeal on civil cases lies to the District Judge or in certain cases appeals may lie directly to the High Court on a question of fact. The grounds are (1) The decision being contrary to law or contrary to the usage having the force of law. (2) failure to determine some material issue of law or usage having the force of law, (3) substantial error or defect in procedure which may possibly have affected the decision of the case. In second appeal, binding of facts arrived at the First Appellate court has either misread the evidence or overlooked important evidence on record. It is open to the High Court, on second appeal to look at the evidence where the First Appellate Court ignores clear evidence on the record and arrives at decision inspite of that evidence. The second appeal will be on the ground that the legal conclusion was erroneous. In two cases the Appellate Court may order a remand, (1) where the original court has disposed off the case on a preliminary point and, (2) the decree is reversed on appeal. The Appellate Court may remand the case where the Appellate court decree is appealable and may further that issue or these issues tried in the case so remanded.

Appelate Courts (Criminal)

Appeals in criminal matters lie to the Sessions Judge from the Subordinate Magistrate. The C. J. M. also hears appeals from the judgement of the Sub-divisional Magistrate. Section 409 of

the Cr. P. C. provides that subject to the provisions of the section an appeal to the court of Sessions shall be heard by the Sessions Judge or by an Additional Sessions Judge, provided that no such appeal shall be heard by the Asst. Sessions Judge, unless the appeal is of a person convicted by any Magistrate of the Second Class. An Addl. Sessions Judge shall hear such appeals when the state government will direct or the Sessions Judge may make over to them.

Appeal should be made in the form of a petition, in writing, presented by the appellant or his advocate which should accompany the judgement or order appealed against. Appeal may be dismissed summarily if the appellate court considers lack of sufficient ground for interference. If records for the case are not with the court, the appellate court may ask for the same and after pursuing the same may dismiss the appeal on insufficient grounds or (I) in an appeal from an order of acquittal, reverse such order and direct that further enquiry be made or the accused may be committed for trial or find him guilty and pass sentence on him according to law or (II) reverse the finding and sentence, and acquit or discharge the accused or order him to be tried by a competent court, after the finding or reduce the sentence. The Appellate Court for reasons to be recorded by it, order the execution of the sentence to be suspended and if he is in confinement, order him to be released on bail. Judgement and orders passed by an appellate court shall be final except in the cases provided in section 417 and Chapter II. Section II (4) of Probation of Offenders Act 1958 lays down that when order has been made under section 3/4 in respect of an offender, the appellate court on revision may set aside such order and may pass sentence on such an offender, which understandably makes the court very powerful regarding criminal cases. But in the case of Dalip Singh v/s the State of Punjab (AIR 1953) the Honourable Judges have held that when discretion has been properly exercised along with accepted judicial lines, an appellate court should not interfere to the detriment of an accused person except for very strong reasons.

District and Sessions Judge

The District and Sessions Judge is appointed by the State

Government on the recommendation of Orissa Public Service Commission vide Art. 233 of the Constitution and Rule 8 (3) and Rule 9 (1) of Orissa Superior Judicial Service Rules 1963. The District and Sessions Judge is an officer of the Orissa Superior Judicial Service who is empowered to deal with cases under Orissa Civil Courts Act. He has both original and appellate jurisdiction. The State Government has invested on him the sessions power by which he is authorised to pass any sentence including death, subject to confirmation of the High Court.

There may be one or more Addl. District & Sessions Judges in a district whose power is coequal with that of the District & Sessions Judge. But under Section (9) of the Bengal, Agra, Assam Civil Courts Act. 1887 (now Orissa Civil Courts Act) the District Judge has administrative control over the Addl. District & Sessions Judge.

The District Judge is the highest administrative authority of the sub-ordinate judiciary in the district, exercising original, appellate and some extraordinary jurisdiction. The original jurisdiction extends to cases relating to matrimony and company matters. But under the civil codes he has no original jurisdiction and tries cases on appeal against the judgement of sub-judges and munsifs. However he may transfer any appeal pending before him from the degree of a munsif to a sub-judge under Orissa Civil Courts. As per O.C.C. Act the appellate jurisdiction of the District Judge has been extended to Rs. 20,000 in certain matters. Under many special Acts like Land Acquisition Act, Indian Succession Act, Patents Act, Copy Right Act, etc. the District Judge has some special jurisdictions. He may constitute tribunals or may head one constituted by the State Government.

Being the administrative head, the District Judge is required to inspect annually or atleast once in eighteen months each of the subordinate civil courts and the court of small causes in order to satisfy himself that the judicial and ministerial work are conducted strictly according to rules prescribed by the High Court. He is also required to send periodical statements to the High Court, renew legal practitioners' certificates, and appoint Class III and Class IV employees of the subordinate judiciary. By exercising his extra-ordinary jurisdiction the District Judge may remove

any suit for trial from a subordinate court to itself for disposal. The District Judge is also the Sessions Judge of the District and offences under Cr. P.C. are tried by the Sessions Judge. He is empowered to pass any sentence authorised by law, but death sentences are subject to confirmation by the High Court. The number of sessions to be held in the following year, which should not be less than six and more than ten, and the dates on which they are to begin is decided by the Sessions Judge in the first week of December.

Munsif Courts

Munsif courts are the lowest courts in the civil side which try all civil cases except those whose cognisance is either expressly or implicitly barred. As the civil procedure code is inexhaustive the munsifs have assumed some sort of implied power. The inherent power under section 151 is exercised in applying the principle of Resjudicata to cases not falling within Section. 2 of the code, in taking cognisance of question which cut at the subject matter of controversy between the parties and in causing restitution to be made on reversal of a decree.

The munsif also serves as the judge of small causes courts or court of money claims. Appeals however, shall not lie to a higher court from the decisions of a small cause court but revisions can lie to the High Court. Under Section 146 of the Cr.P.C. the Munsif has the power to give him finding to Magistrate Ist Class on a reference made by him. He is in charge of the court's records and permits advocates to inspect registers of cases. He has jurisdiction under Indian Contracts Act, Orissa Tenancy Act, Orissa Estate Abolition Act, etc. The Munsif also hears election petitions under Orissa Gram Panchayat Act and Other Election Act. The pecuniary jurisdiction of a munsif is Rs. 4000/-.

Magistrate Courts

The lowest courts in the sub-ordinate judiciary in the criminal side is the Magistrate Court. The Magistrates are recruited by the Orissa Public Service Commission and after selection the High Court appoints them and assigns jurisdiction. A Senior

Magistrate is designated as the S.D.J.M. who remains in charge of a sub-division. After the separation of judiciary from the executive, the magistrates have been classified as judicial and executive magistrates, discharging judicial and executive functions respectively.

The Magistrate exercises those powers specified in section 32 of the Cr.P.C. He may also decide warrant cases and summary cases. The former relates to an offence punishable with death or life imprisonment as the case may be but the latter is not so. When a warrant case is instituted in a police report the accused appears before the magistrate who shall satisfy himself that the documents have been furnished to the accused. Upon consideration of all the documents and making such other examination if the magistrate considers the charge as groundless he shall discharge him.[3] Upon such documents and evidences have been considered and the accused been heard, if the magistrate is of the opinion that the accused had committed an offence and there is ground for trial, he shall frame charges against the accused.[4] After recording the evidence of the witness the Magistrate may acquit or sentence him as prescribed by law. In a summon case the procedure is different. When an accused appears before the Magistrate, the particulars of the offence of which he is accused shall be stated to him and he shall be asked if he has any cause to show why he should not be convicted, but it shall not be necessary to frame a charge. The magistrate may be empowered to take cognisance under Sec. (1), clause (i) or clause (ii) of the Cr.P.C. by the State Government or the District Magistrate of offence which he may try or commit for trial.[5]

Magistrate Ist and 2nd class enjoy certain ordinary and special powers. Ordinary powers are those which are inherent to the office and special powers are invisted on him either by the state Government or the District Magistrate. Any Magistrate can grant bail subject to certain conditions and also in such cases where he is competent.

Adalati Panchayats

In accordance with the provisions of the Orissa Gram Panchyat Act. 1948 a district is to be divided into many circles compris-

ing as many local areas subject to the jurisdiction of the Gram Sasan for establishing an Adalati Panchayat. Every Gram Sasan elects three adult members to act as Panchs who form a panel. One of the three members of the panel is elected as President. The term of office of the members is three years from the date of election. For prescribed reasons any of the panch may be removed by the prescribed authority. The bench of the Panch consists of one Panch who lives in the local area of the sasan in which any one of the parties to the suit resides and another lives in the local area in which none of the parties reside. A panch is barred from taking part in the proceedings in which he or any of his relatives is a party. Vacancies arising due to the death or removal or resignation of a person is to be filled in the manner as provided in Sec. 58 & 59 of the Act. The territorial jurisdiction of the Adalati Panchayat extends to the circle. Cases of persons residing in the circle of the Adalati Panchayat will only be instituted irrespective of the place where offence actually occured.

Jurisdiction

The criminal jurisdiction of the Adalati Panchayat extends to sections 106, 178, 179, 277, 289, 294, 323, 341, 352, 379, 411, 426, 504, 509, 510 of the Cr.P.C. Sections 24, 26, 27 of the Cattle Tresspass Act. 1871. The Adalati Panchayat is empowered to impose fine in cattle tresspass cases. Under section 34 of the Police Act of 1869, the Adalati Panchayat may try certain cases on transfer by the District Magistrate, Sub-Divisional Magistrate or any other magistrate who is empowered to transfer cases under section 192 of Cr.P.C.

Limitations

Persons convicted of an offence and imprisoned for a term of three years or previously convicted for theft by any Adalati Panchayat or is a registered member of a Criminal Tribe under Section 4 of Criminal Tribes Act, 1911 or has been bound over to be of behaviour in proceedings instituted under Section 109 or 110 of Criminal Procedure Code, are not to be tried again by the Adalati Panchayat.

The Adalati Panchayat may impose a fine of Rs. 5/- on the

offender or double to the value of the damage whichever is greater. If the fine is not paid within a period of thiry days from the period of conviction, the defaulter may be imprisoned for not more than fourteen days. In lieu of the sentence he may be released on due admonition. If any complaint made to it is vexatious the Adalati Panchayat may order the complainant to pay Rs. 25/- to the accused.

Criminal cases where a fine has been imposed by the Adalati Panchayat, notwithstanding anything contained in the Cr.P.C. 1898, is not appellable. The S.D.J.M. of the area may cancel or modify or direct for retrial of such cases on the application of the aggrieved. The decision of the S.D.J.M. is not questionable in any court of law.

The jurisdiction of the Adalati Panchayat may be enhanced by the State Government under Section 379, 411 and 426. The Adalati Panchayat may impose a fine not exceeding Rs. 100/- or double of the less caused whichever is greater or in default imprison the offender for a period not exceeding one month.

Section 69 of Chapter VII of Orissa Gram Panchayat Act enumerates the jurisdiction of the Adalati Panchayat to try cases for money due on contracts, for recovery of movable property or for wrongful taking or injuring movable property where the value of the suit does not exceed Rs. 25/-. The Adalati Panchayat may be specially empowered by the State Government to try suits not exceeding Rs. 100/-.

Certain class of suits specified in section 69 may be tried by the Adalati Panchayat when the value of the suit exceeds Rs. 100/- but does not exceed Rs. 200/-. The Adalati Panchayat should sit on such dates and at such places within the limits of its jurisdiction as may be fixed by it with the approval of the District Magistrate. Suits on a balance of partnership Account, by or against minors or persons of unsound mind, for the assessment, enhancement, reduction, abetment or apportionment of rent or immovable property etc., cases where the right to sue expired i.e. after three years cannot be entertained by the Adalati Panchayat. It shall also not try any suit which was decided by a competent court in a former suit between the same parties.

The Adalati Panchayat will not entertain any suit which is vexatious. A case may be dismissed by the Adalati Panchayat if

the petitioner does not turn up on the date fixed or is distinterested in prosecution. If it is satisfied, it may decide cases *exparte.* No decision or order of the Adalati Panchayat will be set aside under section 76 and 79 without notice to the opposite party. While deciding cases the Adalati Panchayat shall be bound by the Panchayat Act. A decree or sentence can only be passed according to good conscience and which is just and equitable. In case of disagreement among the Panchas the majority opinion shall prevail. Decisions given by the Adalati Panchayat shall be final except that the Munsif may cancel or modify or direct retrail by the same or other Adalati Panchayat.

All fines, fees etc. realised by the Adalati Panchayat shall be deposited in the Gram Sasan Fund. Legal practitioners are barred from appearing before the Panchayat. It may be inspected by the District Magistrate.

The Adalati Panchayats are the lowest echelon in the judicial hierarchy for disposal of cases by non judicial authority for quick disposal of cases without much financial constraint on the rural poor.

Separation Of Judiciary

The system of District Magistrate and Collector continued till the end of British rule in India, though the demand for separation of the executive and judicial functions was high. The Britishers, however, adhered to the oriental theory according to which the separation of executive and judicial functions are against genius and traditions of the Orientals.

Independent India took prompt steps in implementing the scheme for separation. In Orissa the scheme for separation was introduced in 1960 covering three districts i.e. Cuttack, Puri and Balasore. Subsequently the scheme was extended to all the districts of the State as per the observation of justice G. D. Khosla which run "The judiciary and the executive must be parted. They have been wedded together too long, and as bedfellows they are capable of doing incalculable harm".

During the colonial period the collector was to maintain law and order, collect revenue and administer justice both civil and criminal. In other words magisterial powers were being invested

on the executive who would investigate into the case, conduct trial and award judgement. Such a system involved threat to misuse of power. As the executive functions were many and diverse the magistrate had to concentrate on them all resulting in procrastination in the judicial proceeding for want of time. In most of the cases judicial pronouncements were improper, irregular and subject to suspicion. Maintenance of law and order, administrative measures and judicial functions were effectively carried out by a single official. Consequently justice was denied by the delaying process.

Separation vested purely judical functions on the judiciary. Maintenance of law and order and administrative functions rested with the executive i.e. Collector and District Magistrate and his subordinates. The executive magistrates are revenue officers. They are responsible for maintenance of law and order. The collector heads the district police organisation. By virtue of the post he exercises powers under the Cr.P.C. Sub-Divisional officers do enjoy powers of a first class magistrate along with some special powers like issue of orders for movement of food grains, permission to hold public meetings issue of licence and renewal thereof, enquiries and investigations entrusted upon him etc. Subordinate revenue officials under the Sub-Divisional officer help in the smooth functioning of the executive. The authorities exercising the executive power directly under the Government and are accountable to the District Magistrate, the Revenue Divisional Commissioner, Commissioner and the Commissioner-cum-Secretary.

On the other hand the judicial officers of the district are appointed by the government in consultation with the Orissa High Court and their services are placed at the disposal of the High Court for suitable posting. This has been done to keep away the judiciary from the control of the executive and to enable the judiciary to function independently.

The Supreme Court in the case of Chandramohan v/s State of Rajasthan has held that an appointment becomes invalid if the concerned High Court was not consulted for the purpose. Even in cases of transfer the High Court has supreme power. This has been established in case of Ram Mohan v/s State of Assam and Nagaland 1967. The High Court has absolute authority over

its judges. The power of the Governor ceases the moment he has either appointed or promoted a person to the rank of a District Judge and assigned him a position in the cadre.

Independence of Judiciary

Separation of judiciary has no meaning it the autonomy of judges in delivering judgement is encroached by either the executive or the legislature and judges are made to function in a fear-injected atmosphere. "The independence of judiciary loses all meaning if any judicial decision unpleasing to the party leaders can be reversed by fresh or retrospective legislation." But before making a search for objectivity, the imperfections in human nature may be considered, for judges are discrete human beings and members of said groups. Influences of tradition and values of the society are no less even if there is a clear, comprehensive and logically arranged rules of conduct. Curdozo writes "the great tides and currents which engulf the rest of the men, do not turn aside in their course and pass the judges by."

Apart from the environmental factor, the wording of the documents gives no unequivocal guidance to a judge for giving decisions. It is not always expected from a judge to give judgements guided by previous judgements. The constitution of a country cannot always be a reliable guide as the framers had perceived but very little the social, economic and political changes. In the absence of a clear cut well defined principle of jurisprudence, the judge has to exercise discretion which may not be free from the values which influence him consciously or unconsciously. Only serious and reflective persons may try to mind their ways. Many complex factors pertaining to convictions about right or wrong, role, concepts, policy goals and personal ambitions may interest which may deter him to maintain a consistency in giving out decisions. Thus apart from legal prudence certain background factors must also be considered in the selection of judges but by whom ?

The Indian Constitution in theory authorises the President to appoint a judge, in consultation with the Chief Justice but in practice, the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers at the Centre and the Chief Minister and the Ministry play a hidden hand

in the selection of judges. Caste, communal and regional feelings rather than outstanding merit are considerable. The process laid by the Union Home and Law Ministry for selection of judges makes the opinion of the Chief Justice in the appointment of judges only redundant. Under the provision the Chief Justice will inform the vacancy in the High Court to the Governor, who acting on the advice of the Chief Minister would refer it to the Union Home and Law Ministry. The recommendation would thereafter reach the President through the Prime Minister. Thus there is better chance of appointing an amenable person which may not be strictly on the basis of qualification or merit befitting the dignified post. Though independence of judiciary is ensured by making the judges of the High Court practise in the Supreme Court after superannuation, yet there are a number of instances where judges have been appointed as Chairman of various Commissions which are made more on the basis of political patronage.

The subordinate judiciary is no less immune from legislative or executive encroachment. The Joint Parliamentary Committee observed that "we have been greatly impressed by the mischiefs which have resulted elsewhere from a system under which promotion from grade to grade in fundamental hierarchy is in the hands of a minister exposed to pressures from members of a popularly elected legislature. Nothing is more likely to sap the independence of a magistrate than the knowledge that his career depends upon the favour of a minister. It is the sub-judiciary in India who are brought most closely in contact with the people and it is no less important, perhaps indeed even more important, that thier independence should be placed beyond question than in the case of superior judges."[6]

The Constitutions makes it amply clear that appointments shall be made in consultation with the High Court of Orissa. This is mandatory whenever appointments and postings of District Judges are made. The Supreme Court has held that (a) Consultation with the High Court at the time of each appointment is mandatory, (b) High Court in this context means the full court of all the Judges and consideration by a select committee of some of the Judges cannot take the place of consideration by the High Court, (c) even consideration by some other body besides the High Court would

be a contravention of the article, (d) an appointment made by the Governor under Art. 309 which violates the provisions of Art. 283 as explained above shall be void.[7]

The Orissa High Court has held that "the Governor cannot impose any punishment on a District Judge except the penalties of dismissal and removal."[8] As such the Governor is not the disciplinary authority. In another judgement the Supreme Court is of the view that the power of posting of a District Judge under Art. 233 does not include the power of transfer which solely rests with the High Court vide Art. 235. But this contributed in raising serious doubts about the validity of judgements and decress and orders passed by the District Judges, resulting in the amendment the of Constitution. In the matter of appointment of a District Judge the Government cannot set aside the recommendation of the Supreme Court but may defer till the person reaches superannuation which automatically cancels his appointment.

The Control of the High Court is exclusive and complete in matters of posting, promotion and transfer of personnel in Orissa Judicial Service which also includes disciplinary control where no consultation with the Governor is required.

But the High Court being a part of integrated judiciary is under the dual control of, one, the apex body i. e. the Supreme Court and, two, the Union Government. The organisation and jurisdiction of the High Court is a central subject. The Judges of the High Courts are appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and are transferred by him from one High Court to the other in the territory of India. However healthy this procedure may be to keep the judiciary out of prejudices, this has not been welcomed in judicial circles. The main point of resentment being inter-state transfer of judges may lead to posting of a judge in a state where he would be completely ignorant of the local language.

The Parliament is empowered to enhance the jurisdiction of a High Court. The Supreme Court lays down precedents which High Courts and the other subordinate courts must adhere. No doubt the Constitution has provided enough provision for keeping the judiciary outside the purview of the executive or the legislative pressure.

Resenting the judgements, the Union Legislature has held the

view that it is supreme, and an elected body, which is more representative than the Constituent Assembly, thereby justifying frequent constitutional amendments. The judges on the other hand are appointed and therefore have no sanction of popular will. In this regard it may be pointed out that the judges only interpret the laws enacted by the Parliament to determine validity within the provision of the Constitution which is supreme. Both the Parliament and the Legislatures are creatures of the Constitution and are therefore expected to function in terms of the Constitution. The amendments to the Constitution are often brought about with a rhetoric to bring about socio-economic justice which demands abridgement of fundamental rights. "There is no reason to suppose that courts would have obstructed the progress of our country if the laws were valid, reasonable and in the interest of the public. What the State is really afriad of is the judicial check and it wants to bring about reforms in the exercise of its arbitrary power... Further the Supreme Court held on the application of the principal of 'Prospective over ruling' that all the amendments made to the Constitution upto the date the said judgement was delivered, would be valid not only for the past but also for the future. The result is that the State has ample power under the said amendments to make laws revolutionising the entire socio-economic structure of the country."[9]

Art. 226 of the Constitution empowers the High Court to issue writs in cases of infringement of fundamental rights of a citizen which is wider than the power of the Supreme Court in the sense that writs be can issued for any other purpose. It may be inferred from this power that in case the legislature makes any law infringing the fundamental right of the citizen, the person has prima facie right to seek readdress in the court of law. Here the conflict is not between the legislature and the judiciary but between the legislature and the people of the state. The role of judiciary is to interpret the validity of the law in oder to protect the citizen against legislative encroachment. "The prestige of an institution does not depend upon the justiciability of its acts, it hinges on its performance based on sound principles. If that be not so the legislature loses its prestige every time its Act is set aside by the judiciary. On the other hand its prestige and reputation will be enhanced in the public mind, if its acts stand

the test of fundamental rights in the objective appreaisal of an independent judiciary.[10]

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4. *Criminal Procedure Code*, 1898, Sec. 242.
5. *Ibid*. Sec. 251—253
6. *Joint Parliamentary Committee Report*, Vol. I. p. 210, para 237.
7. Chandramohan v s The State of Rajasthan 1966
8. High Court decision delivered by justice C. K. Mishra, Registrar, Orissa High Court v/s B. K. Mishra.
9. Justice K. Subha Rao, *Conflicts in the Indian Polity*, S. Chand & Co.
10. *Ibid*.

Appendix—I

LIST OF CHIEF JUSTICES OF ORISSA HIGH COURT SINCE 1948

1. Honourable Justice Sri Birakishore Roy
2. ,, ,, ,, Bachu Jagannath Das
3. ,, ,, ,, Lingaraj Panigrahi
4. ,, ,, ,, R. L. Narasingham
5. ,, ,, ,, Khalil Ahmad
6. ,, ,, ,, Satyabhusan Burman
7. ,, ,, ,, Gatikrushna Mishra
8. ,, ,, ,, Sivanarayan Shankar
9. ,, ,, ,, Sukanta Kishore Ray
10. ,, ,, ,, Ranganath Mishra
11. ,, ,, ,, Damburudhar Pathak
12. ,, ,, ,, Brajanath Mishra.

Appendix—II

ORGANISATION JUDICIARY IN ORISSA.

High Court
Chief Justice
Puisne Judges (nine)
ORIGINAL APPELLATE ADMINISTRATIVE
Subordinate Judiciary

Civil	Criminal
District Judge.	Sessions Judge.
Addl. Dist. Judge.	Addl. Sessions Judge
Chief Judicial Magistrate	Chief Judicial Magistrate
Sub—Judge	S. D. J. M.
Munsif	Magistrate Ist and II Class

Panchayati Adalat.

12

HIGH COURT—A STUDY

Bharat B. Das

No evaluation of the judicial system will be complete and realistic unless the infirmities which have crept into it, or drawbacks which have manifested themselves, are considered. The image of the court depends upon the way the cases are handled, the extent of confidence the court inspires in the parties to the case, the promptness or absence of delay in the disposal of cases and the proximity of the judicial finding with the reality of the fact.[1] Our High Courts enjoy vast powers and are also the final authority. So they must be under constant vigilance and responsible criticism. No law of contempt shall stifle exposure of judicial failure or malfunctioning.[2]

Madhusudan Das, the chief architect of the scheme of Orissa High Court included in clause 35 of Letter Patent of Patna High Court that there would be a circuit court for Orissa.[3] This circuit court was the first of its kind and was introduced in Orissa on an experimental basis.[4] The first sitting of the circuit court was held on 8th May, 1916 presided over by Chief Justice Chamier and Justice Shaffudin of Patna High Court. Mr. M. S. Das, the then president of the Bar Association, in his Welcome Address, expressed the feeling of the people by saying "I am giving expression to the feeling of the millions of Orissa when I express a hope that this court will become a permanent Bench in the near future."[5] This system continued for 32 years despite its inherent defects.

Gradually, the demand for a separate High Court for Orissa was intensified. The 2nd Parlakhemundi Ministry of Orissa resolved on 15th August 1942 to constitute a committee headed by Sri B. K. Roy, the then Advocate General of Orissa, to enquire into the feasibility of establishment of a separate High Court for Orissa. Basing on the recommendation of the committee, the Legislative Assembly presented an address on 3rd March 1984 to the Governor for submission to the Governor General. The Governor

Gneeral of India was pleased to order on 30th April 1984 to constitute a High Court for Orissa. The order reads "Now thereof in exercise of power conferred by Sub Section (1) of Section 229 of the Government of India Act of 1935, the Governor General is pleased to make the following orders :

"As from the fifth day of July 1948, there shall be a High Court for the Province of Orissa, which shall consist of a Chief Justice and such other judges as the Governor General would appoint in accordance with the provision of Section 220 of the Act."

On 26th July 1948 Orissa High Court was inaugurated by Hon'ble Sri H. J. Kania, the then Chief Justice of the Federal Court of India. The High Court started functioning with four judges.[6] The task of the Constituent Assembly in regard to provisions regarding the High Court was comparatively simple. The High Courts as an institution had been functioning in India for nearly ninety years and built up a tradition for independence and impartiality. Judicial independence was ensured primarily through the procedure for the appointment of judges and fixity of a tenure for them.[7] In constituting the High Court two considerations motivated the framers of our constitution. Firstly, to insulate the High Courts from all political, local and other influences, and the High Courts like the Supreme Court, are envisaged as the bastions of people's right and justice.[8]

In the hierarchy of Courts in the State territory, the High Court is the highest court followed by a system of subordinate courts. Article 214 provides that there shall be a High Court in each state. The word 'shall' connotes the existence of a High Court for each state.

Every High Court shall consist of a Chief Justice and such other judges as the president may apppoint from time to time.[9] The constitution has not fixed the number of judges of a High Court. But the president is under constitutional obligation to review the strength of each High Court corresponding to the number of pending cases.[10] At present, the sanctioned strength of Orissa High Court is ten, including the Chief Justice. A judge of a High Court is appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal. The procedure for appointment of judges are prescribed in the constitution. Article 217(2) pres-

cribed qualification for appointment of High Court judges and Article 217(1) provides that whenever a judge of a High Court is to be appointed the President shall consult the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State and the Chief Justice of the High Court. The consultation with each of the three constitutional functionaries must be full and effective consultation.

This system of consultation is envisaged in the constitution as a mechanism of "check and balance" between the counter forces and to protect the independence of judiciary. But in reality the Chief Minister of the State plays an important role in the process of selection of judges. The process is initiated by the Chief Justice of the High Court by recommending names, from Bar as well as Bench. The State Government picks up and chooses a name (s) from out of the panel and sends up its choice to the Central Government. In case a person regarded as suitable by the State Government has not been recommended by the Chief Justice, the State Government requests the former to consider the inclusion of such a person and since invariably the Chief Justice consents to such an inclusion, an agreed panel is finally sent up to the Central Government for the approval of the President.[11] If there is no disagreement between the Chief Justice and Chief Minister, the task is very simple. In 95 percent of cases there has been no difference of opinion between the Chief Justice and the Chief Minister because they usually talk between themselves and find candidates acceptable to both.[12] In case of difference of opinion among them the president can override the opinion of others and decide whose opinion should be accepted and whether appointment should be made or not. The president means president acting through his council of ministers.[13]

After receiving the panel of names from the State Government the Law Ministry of India sends the panel to the Chief Justice of India for his views, for, consultation with the Chief Justice of India is a must. If he agrees with the nomination, there is no difficulty. In most of the cases, the view of the Chief Justice of India is accepted. Unless the Law Ministry finds something radically wrong with nomination of Chief Justice, the law ministry sends it to the President for appointment[14] The role of the President and the Governor is passive in this consultative sphere and the dominant role is invariably that of the Prime Minister and

the Chief Minister. A Chief Minister who is in the good books of the Prime Minister is a real selector of judges of the High Court. The influence at the Chief Minister's level is marked by consideration, mostly subjective rather then objective.[15]

The Law Commission in its XIV report of 1958 regretfully noted, "Communalism, regionalism and political patronage have in a considerable measure influenced appointment to the High Court Judiciary," the Law Commission also expressed its concern over the fact that the judgeship of a High Court "has become a post to be worked and canvassed for". Generally a State Chief Minister and a Chief Justice do not recommend persons from outside the State.[16] But Justice S. Burman was appointed as a Judge in the Orissa High Court from Calcutta Bar.

From the date of establishment of Orissa High Court 35 judges including 11 Chief Justices have been appointed so far. In the appointment of Chief Justices seniority was a criterion until appointment of Justice S. N. Shankar of Delhi High Court as the Chief Justice of Orissa on 30 October 1975. As a result Justice S.K. Roy, the Senior Judge of the Orissa High Court, was denied the post for a temporary period. However, Justice Roy was appointed to the covetted post after the retirement of Justice Shankar.

The latest policy of the Government of India is that the Chief Justice and 1/3rd judges of the High Court should be from outside the State. The policy was formulated to avoid the possibility of judges becoming casteist and parochial in their approach and developing narrow sectarian interest in the High Court to which they belong.[17] As per this declared policy, Chief Justice D. Pathak came from Gauhati High Court. The system of transfer of Chief Justice is not new to Orissa. Prior to Chief Justice D. Pathak, Chief Justice Khalil Ahamed and Chief Justice S.N. Shankar had come from Patna and Delhi High Courts, respectively. This policy of transfer may adversely affect the Independence of judiciary. The brilliant advocates will be reluctant to accept the judgeship for fear of transfer.

The transfer of judges was challenged in the Supreme Court on the ground that a judge cannot be transferred without his consent. The Supreme Court in Union of India Vs Sankal Chand[18] held that a judge of a High Court could be transferred

under Article 222 (1) without his consent. If consent were imported in Art. 222 as to make condition precedent to transfer a judge from one High Court to another, then a judge by withholding consent could render the power contained in Art. 222 wholly ineffective and negatory. The power to transfer High Court Judges is conferred by the constitution in public interest and not for the purpose of providing the executive with a weapon to punish a judge who does not toe its line or for one reason or other has fallen from its grace. The extraordinary power which the constitution has conferred on the President by Art. 222(1) cannot be exercised in a manner which is calculated to defeat or destroy in one stroke the independance of judges. In judges transfer case[19] also it was held that the transfer of judges from one court to another was valid.

The second schedule part D of the constitution deals with remuneration to be paid to the judges of the High Court as follows :

"There shall be paid to the judges of High Court in respect of time spent in actual service, salary at the following rates permensum that is to say the Chief Justice Rs. 4000/- and other judges Rs. 3500/-. This amount, was fixed by the constitution makers as early as in the year 1950. The salary is not revised since then. Because of poor remuneration and unsatisfactory service conditions the good talents are not attracted to the bench. In the words of Lord Dennings, the finest character and best legal brain are refrained from getting attracted to the Bench, sometimes an attempt is made to equate High Court judges with the bureaucracy so far as conditions of service are concerned. But that is a perverted comparison.[20] It must be remembered that a large majority of High Court Judges are recruited from the Bar and it is impossible to recruit really brilliant lawyers in the Judicial profession unless attractive terms are offered.

The constitution does not define or classify the general jurisdiction of the High Court as the High Courts were in existence before the commencement of the constitution. The power and jurisdiction of the High Court was continued by the constitution with the improvement that any restriction upon the jurisdiction as to revenue matter that existed prior to constitution shall no longer exist.[21] Article 225 says that subject to provision of the

constitution or any law of appropriate legislature (a) the jurisdiction of the High Court, (b) the Law Administered in the existing High Court, (c) The powers of the judges in relation to administration of justice in the court, (d) the power to make rule of the High Court shall be the same as immediately before the commencement of the constitution. Our High Court has been entrusted with the following powers :

1. High Court is a court of record. It has all the powers including the power to punish for its contempt.[22]
2. to superintend the subordinate courts and the tribunals within its jurisdiction.[23]
3. to issue prerogative writs for the enforcement of the fundamental rights or for any other purpose.[24]
4. to remove a case and hear itself, pending in subordinate court involving a substantial question of law regarding the interpretation of the constitution.[25]
5. to hear appeals, reference and revisions in civil cases under the provision of Civil procedure code of 1908.
6. to hear appeals in criminal cases under Criminal Procedure of 1973.
7. to exercise original jurisdiction in certain matters under special statutes and under its special letter patent jurisdiction.

A two-fold territorial limitation has been placed on the power of the High Court to issue writs under article 226(1). In the first place, the power is to be exercised "through out the territories in relation to which it exercises jurisdiction"; i.e. the writs issued by the High Court cannot run beyond the territories subject to its jurisdiction. Secondly the person or authority to whom a High Court issues such a writ must be "within those territories". It clearly implies that they must be answerable to its jurisdiction either by residence or location within those territories.[26]

Article 226 is couched in compherensive phraseology and it *ex facie* confers a wide power on the High Court to reach injustice whenever it is found. A wide language is deliberately used in describing the nature of power, the purpose for which, and the person or authority against whom, it can be exercised.[27]

The makers of the constitution, having decided to provide for certain basic safeguards for the people in the new setup, which they called fundamental rights, evidently thought it necessary to provide also a quick and inexpensive remedy for enforcement of such rights and they conferred, in states' sphere, new and wide power on the High Court of issuing directions, orders or writ primarily for the enforcement of fundamental rights, the power to issue such directions etc. For any other purpose being also included with a view apparently to place all the High Courts in this country in somewhat the same position as the courts of Kings Bench in England.[28]

The jurisdiction of the High Court is not limited to the protection of the fundamental rights but also "for any other purpose." The word "and" used before the words "for any other purpose" are to be read to purposes distinct, separate and not connected with the enforcement of fundamental rights.[29] The word "for any other purpose" means the enforcement of a legal right on legal duty. The existence of a legal right or duty and the infringement thereof are the foundation of the exercise of the jurisdiction of the High Court. The right that can be enforced must ordinarily be the personal or individual right of the applicant.[30]

Prior to judges transfer case[31] Supreme Court had taken a view that it is only a person whose fundamental right is violated can approach the court for relief under Articles 32 and 226 of the Constitution or in other words he must have a cause of action for enforcement of his fundamental right. But, a contrary view was taken by the Supreme Court in the judges transfer case. It was held that where a person or class of persons to whom legal injury is caused by reason of violation of a fundamental right is unable to approach the court for judicial redress on account of poverty or socially or economically disadvantaged position, any member of the public acting bonafide can move the court for relief under Article 32 or 226, so that the fundamental rights may become meaningful not only for the rich but also for a large section of the society who are living a life of want and destitution and who are by reason of lack of awareness, assertiveness and resources unable to seek judicial redress.

Where a member of the public acting bonafide moves the

court for enforcement of a fundamental right on behalf of a person or class of persons who on account of poverty or disabilities cannot approach the court for relief, such member of public may move the court even by just writting a letter, because it would not be right or fair to expect a person acting *pro bono publico* to incur expenses out of his own pocket for the enforcement of fundamental right of the poor or deprived section of the community and in such a case a letter addressed by him can legitimately be regarded as an writ petition.

In a democratic society, there is a need for a strong and independent judiciary free from political interference. Our constitution emphasises a non-political Judiciary whose independence has been elaborately safeguarded by the procedure of appointment, fixity of tenure, special procedure for removal in the event of misbehaviour or incapacity, bar to practise in the same High Court after retirement, salaries and allowances are charged to consolidated Fund of the State and other matters affecting their position and independence as judge. But the most important problem which shaking the foundation of independent judiciary is 'committed judiciary'. According to this theory the Goverment of the day has the prerogative as well as the duty to appoint such persons as judges.[32]

The Law Commission under the Chairmanship of H.R. Khanna in its 8th report on "the method of appointment of Judges" has also referred to this aspect and has made this specific recommendation to the effect that while affiliation in the remote past with political party should not constitute a bar in itself, no one should be appointed as a judge unless for a period not less than seven years he has snapped all affiliation with political parties and unless during the period he has distinguished himself in an independent, dispassionate approach and free from political prejudices, bias or leaning. Though these recommendations are for appointment of Supreme Court Judges, the same may as well be applicable in case of High Court Judges.

The strength and failure of the judicial system, depends on its utility and credibility as a necessary organ of the state. The respect it would evolve and the confidence it would inspire would depend upon the way it satisfies the hopes and aspirations of the people in the quest for justice. Justice should be

handy, cheap, speedy and substantial. But in case of our system it is reverse. The seekers of justice have to wait for years together to get justice. Litigation has become costly and a gamble for the parties; they do not know how and when their agony will end. The problem of pending cases has reached such a stage which threatens the very faith of the people in the court of law. Table-I[33] shows the number of cases pending before various High Courts in India upto 1979 and Table-II[34] shows the number of judges appointed in different High Courts upto 1981. The strength of judges has not been proportionately increased, either with the growth of population or litigation.

Table—I Number of cases pending in High Courts

Name of the High Court	1961	1977	1979
Allahabad	63602	132749	103338
Andhra Pradesh	25429	15887	25053
Assam & Nagaland	2574	—	—
Bombay	30267	52592	57998
Calcutta	54501	72448	77764
Delhi	15591	26587	30421
Gujarat	15024	11722	15871
Gauhati	—	6548	15871
Jammu & Kashmir	1146	4742	6753
Kerala	26168	42739	31712
Madhya Pradesh	11197	46613	37952
Mysore	11690	36449	55720
Orissa	5676	6042	9333
Patna	10658	29135	34482
Punjab & Haryana	18817	46060	34115
Rajasthan	8086	20558	58630
Madras	—	81763	58630
Sikkim	—	21	29
Himachal Pradesh	—	5019	6129

The problem of back-log cases in Orissa is comparatively less acute than other High Courts of India. This problem cannot be solved only by increasing the number of judges, though some addition may have to be made. But what is necessary is to revamp the judicial system to improve the quality of judges, to

Table - II Number of Judges appointed.

Name of State	1951	1961	1971	1981
Allahabad	19	38	48	60
Andhra Pradesh	10	19	22	29
Bombay	20	19	28	39
Calcutta	19	25	43	32
Delhi	—		17	26
Gujarat	—	9	19	16
M. P.	10	15	17	24
H. P.	1	1	3	3
P & H	7	18	17	21
Rajasthan	9	10	13	14
Kerala	—	14	14	14
Madras	18	14	18	21
J & K	3	3	5	4
Assam	2	4	4	5
Mysore	5	10	16	22
Orissa	4	6	7	7
Patna	17	20	21	25
Sikkim	—	—	—	2

impart a sense of urgency to the judicial process and instil in the legal profession a sense of social commitment. If the number of appeals in the High Court is to be reduced the quality of the Subordinate Judiciary has to be improved.[35]

In order to dispose off cases earlier and to relieve financially the litigants residing in the far corner of the state two benches of Orissa High Court may be established at Berhampur and Sambalpur. This is a long standing demand from the different part of southern and western Orissa.

Some times an accusation levelled against the judiciary is that the finding of fact does not accord with the reality of the situation. Judges, of course, have to give their verdict on the evidence adduced before them. Sometimes, witnesses do not tell the truth and also persons who could give the true version are not willing to come forward for different reasons. Whatever may be the reason, the result is that a judicial finding of fact is sometimes entirely different from the reality. If this difference between reality and finding becomes more in number, it is

bound to shake the confidence of the people in the ability of the court to ascertain the truth and destroy the very faith of the people in the court of law.[36]

High Court is the highest institution of judiciary in the state and its writ and other jurisdictions are wide. The High Court has always acted as the guardian of the guaranteed right of the people and has been upholding their liberties within the framework of the constitution. This sacred institution is playing a vital role in shaping the destiny of people in harmonising their social relationship by dispensing justice, without fear or favour. The established traditions of the court are subject to external onslaught at times. In spite of that the traditions are being maintained without yielding to such attack. Despite the vicissitude of political life of state causing at times strain on their duties as judges they maintain the rule of law, because they believe that where law ends, tyranny begins.[37]

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13

THE CONGRESS PARTY IN ORISSA : STUDY OF LEADERSHIP PATTERN AND FACTIONLISM

J. K. Baral
J. K. Mahapatra

The Congress is the oldest political party in India and it was founded by some middle class people as a forum to ventilate grievances of the people before the British Government. Its immediate objective was not the independence of India nor any radical change in the existing social, economic and political systems of the country. It was at best a "gentlemen's club" which the elites would use as their spokesman and as their vehicle for promoting their group interests. In course of time, with the entry of more elite with different sets of ideas its character began to slowly change and other objectives increasingly attracted its attention. It become gradually evident that the ultimate and the most important goal of Congress was India's independence. Further, the composition of the party gradually changed and the people of the other classes slowly entered into it. In appearance at least Congress became an all-class party and it finally emerged as the most important as well as the largest party in the country. No wonder, under its guidance and leadership India gained freedom and this has proved to be the greatest asset of the party in the post-independence period.

In Orissa the Congress party came into being officially in 1921.[1] The people of the state were then being slowly conscious of thier political servitude, and the agitation against British colonialism had just left off the ground. But the freedom movement was not the only political movement in which Oriyas were then involved. At that time an equally important cause, if not more important, was the unification of Oriya-speaking areas and the formation of Orissa as a separate state. No doubt, both these aims were supported by all important Oriya leaders. But there developed some difference of opinion among them regarding which of the two deserved more attention at that time. While Gopa-

bandhu Das and his Satyavadi friends thought that the most important task before all Indians including Oriyas was to fight for the independence of the country, some other leaders led by an equally towering personality named Madhusudan Das argued that the first task of Oriya was to make the "Oriya mother" free by uniting all Oriya-speaking areas and creating the "Oriya nation". Both the leaders were equally great patriots as well as illustrious sons of Orissa. But there were some other people—especially ex-feudal lords, particularly the rulers of princely states and Zamindars—whose love for Orissa was not beyond suspicion. But they extended support to the cause of the "Oriya nation" perhaps with a view to dealing a blow to the Congress movement in the Oriya region. As most of them were supporters of the British Raj, they were not happy with the growth of the Congress party in their areas. It was a very critical period for Congress. But the party was able to overcome this crisis due to the able leadership and statemanship of Gopabandhu Das.[2] Once Orissa was made as separate state in 1936, this conflict between the Congress movement and the for "Orissa nationalism" almost disappeared and the fight for India's independence gained vigour and momentum.

Even when Gopabandhu Das was alive, casteism had begun to infect the Congress organization. But, to a great extent, he was able to mitigate it. With his exit, the caste-based factional conflict in the party came to the surface.[3] The Satyavadi group whose leader for a long time was no other than Gopabandhu Das became known as the promoter of Brahmin dominance within the party. The anti-Brahmin group in the party consisted of some important leaders most of whom were either Karans or Kshyatriyas/Khandayats. It is true that the leadership of one faction was controlled by Brahmins while that of the other function was controlled by non-Brahmins. But it was also true that the first group included many non-Brahmins and the second group contained many Brahmins. Though both factions were multi-case in composition, there was little doubt that the leadership of each faction was, to a great extent, casteist.

After Independence

As hinted above, the feudal elements and other rich people in

general, were opposed the Congress movement and on many occasions helped the British government in punishing and suppressing it. But, as it became increasingly evident in course of time that the Congress was going to win, and the British would hand over power to it, most of these pro-British elements, being essentially opportunists of the first order, changed their tones and, one after another, began entering the Congress. It so happened that on the eve of independence, many of these ex-agents of British colonialism were happily seated on the important positions within the Congress organisation and, no wonder, emerged ruling elites of free India—one of the early setbacks that the people of not only Orissa but of other states of the country also suffered on the heel of independence. The reason was that those who were privileged during the British time found themselves annointed as the new rulers.

Like most other parties in Orissa, Congress has been dominated since the beginning by the dominant castes, namely, Brahmin, Karan and Kshyatriya/Khandayats, especially the first two. The Khandayats, who constitute the largest caste group in the state, are generelly attached to agriculture and during the British rule they did not have much interest in education. On the other hand, Brahmins and Karans, because of historical momentum and cultural propensity, got education in large numbers and, as a result, dominated not only the employment sector, but also politics. This inter-caste differential in regard to politicisation continued to be reflected in the post-independence politics of Orissa, although in recent years the involvement of Khandayats in politics has, to some extent, increased.

Perhaps except Jharkhand which is a party of the tribal of Western Orissa, all other parties in Orissa including Congress are dominated by high and middle castes, particularly the three elite castes mentioned above. They have been occupying key posts not only in the government, but also in the party. Among the most important leaders of Congress since 1947 are H. K. Mahtab, N. K. Choudhury, Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra, Nilamani Rautray, Sadasiv Tripathy, Binayak Acharya, Mrs. Nandini Satapathy, Janaki Ballav Pattanaik and Rama Chandra Rath. Of this small list, five are Brahmins, three are Karans and two are Kshyatriyas/Khandayats. This pattern of caste composition of the Congress

leadership would be, more or less, reflected in a bigger list, if prepared, consisting of all Congress ministers and party executives of the post-independence period.

No doubt, comparatively speaking, of all political parties, Congress enjoy the maximum support of Adivasis and Harijans who seem to believe that it is the best promoter of their interests. Many Harijans and Adivasis have been appointed in high posts in the government as well as in the party organization. For many years, however, they have remained only "token elites". They get these posts not so much because they deserve them on the basis of their merit and power, but due to their "depressed" status. While some posts are, according to law, reserved for them, some others are offered to them by the party in order to keep them in good humour and reinforce the belief that it stands for their betterment. However, in course of time, Harijan and Adivasi leaders of Congress have gained self-confidence. They have started asserting themselves in the power game. In fact a few of them like Luxman Mallik and Prahallad Mallik[4] are regarded as heavy weights in the state politics. The two upcoming Harijan leaders are Arjun Sethi and Mrutyunjay Nayak who had represented Bhadrak and Phulbani constituencies respectively in the last Lok Sabha. In their respective districts they are quite influential actors and do also count in state politics. Further many Adivasi and Harijan MLAs who are not of much consequence in the state politics are very powerful in their respective constituencies. Because of various powers and privileges that they enjoy and the large amount of patronage at their disposal, they are able to build independent spheres of influence in their areas. This trend is likely to continue, and in future these two depressed communities would perhaps have more say in the Congress party and the government formed by it.

In the pre-independence period and its aftermath, the Orissa unit of Congress was led by people who were active in the freedom movement. They, in general, were honest and dedicated people and great sacrifices for the greater cause of the freedom of the country. Names like Gopabandhu Das, Madhu Sudan Das, Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Mishra and H. K. Mahtab evoked love and respect in the people and being inspired by these great leaders many people joined the Congress, thus making it prob-

ably the only "mass party" at the national level.

After the British left India, the Congress party came to power both at the Centre and in the states and many of those who got important governmental as well as party posts were the leading lights of the freedom struggle. In Orissa the Congress was led by H. K. Mahtab, Radhanath Rath, Satyapriya Mohanty, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Sadasiva Tripathy, Radha Krishna Biswasray, Nanda Kishore Das and Raja Krishna Bose etc. The list also included relative youngsters like Biren Mitra, Nilamani Routray and Banmali Pattanaik who were leaders of the youth wing of the Congress during the British time and who soon made thier marks in Orissa politics after independence. One man who had meteoric rise in politics in 1950s but who had been less involved in Congress activities during the freedom struggle was Bijaynanda Pattanaik, popularly known as Biju Pattanaik.

In the first half of 1960s Orissa Congress was controlled by the Biju-Biren-Nilamani group with Biju as its leader. Nilamani and Biren were student leaders and knew each other during their student days at Ravenshaw College, Cuttack. But their acquaintance with Biju during those days was minimal. Biju, a dashing pilot, made his name by his daring and heroic rescue of an Indonesian leader during the freedom struggle of Indonesia which was under the Dutch rule. By this feat he attracted the attention of top leaders of India, particularly that of Jawaharlal Nehru. These three—Biju, Biren and Nilamani—worked for H. K. Mahtab within the Congress and due to his patronage, quickly gathered a lot of political clout. Further, because of his special links with Mahtab, Biju, in a short time, established himself as one of the leading industrialists of the state. However, it did not take much time for this group to fall out with Mahtab who would not encourage them as much as they would like him to do.[5] Towards the end of 1950s they challenged his leadership and made determined efforts to throw him out of power.[6] They succeeded in this regard and captured both the party machinery and the governmental power. These three represented a new phase in the Congress leadership. They and their friends were not very senior and important leaders of the Congress during the freedom struggle. But they had some association with both the party and the freedom movement. In a way they represented a *transi-*

tional phase in the Congress history.

For a brief interval Sadasiv Tripathy, a member of the old generation leadership of the Congress party, became Chief Minister in February, 1965. But the Biju group continued to dominate the party and have important say in the government. Thus the Tripathy period was not really a reversion to the old leadership in Congress symbolised by H. K. Mahtab. As in many other states in India, Congress in Orissa was swept off its feet by the hurricane of 1967 election and two non-Congress parties—the Swatantra and Jana Congress—formed a coalition government in Orissa which lasted till 1970. After 1971 election, for a short while, Orissa was ruled by the coalition of the Utkal Congress and Swatantra. This government fell due to internal contradictions and the way was cleared for the coming back of the Congress to power under the leadership of Mrs. Nandini Satapathy, who, before that, was a Minister of State at the Centre.

Nandini Satapathy, an Ex-Communist, with the "tacit alliance" with the CPI, remained in power virtually from 1972 to 1976 when she was forced to leave office by the High Command. Because of her close relations with the CPI, she antagonised not only those Congress people who had defected from the PSP not long ago, but also many others who were in the Congress since long.[8] The dissident faction won the confidence of the central leadership and was able to oust her from power. The man who succeeded her as the Chief Minister was ironically also an Ex-Communist named Binayak Acharya who had joined the Congress party only a decade ago. Acharya lost his office due to the Congress defeat in 1977 and in June 1977 the Janata formed government in Orissa. As a result of several factors including factional infighting, the Janata government collapsed in 1979 and in the 1980 Lok Sabha elections the Congress came back to power at the centre impressively and it also won a big victory in the Orissa Assembly elections held in that year. J. B. Patnaik, who was a Cabinet Minister at the Centre, was appointed the Chief Minister of the State. The other Congress leaders who were prominent in that election were K. C. Lenka and R. C. Rath, both in their late thirties.

Mrs. Satapathy, B. Acharya and J. B. Patnaik marked a new turn in the evolution of the Congress leadership. Hardly was

any of them a prominent freedom fighter or otherwise important in the pre-independence politics of the state. Further, two of these three did not belong to Congress; they were known as Communist activists. While Mrs. Satapathy was a full-time worker of the CPI, Acharya reportedly had Communist leaning and supported the party mostly from the outside.[9] J. B. Patnaik, always a "Mahtab man", entered the Congress party in early 1970s and it was not accidental that his entry into it coincided with the re-entry of Mahtab into the Congress after the fall of the Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition government. R. C. Rath, a Minister of State at the Centre and the main rival of J. B. Patnaik in Orissa politics till he resigned from the party before the 1985 election, entered Congress in early 1970s and had quick rise in politics after he was able to cultivate Sanjay Gandhi, ironically though, through J. B. Patnaik. It is thus apparent that since the early 1970s the Congress in Orissa was cut off from its freedom war connection in respect of the leadership recruitment although it continued to harp on the theme of its freedom struggle heritage as its main trump card in elections. While this new breed of Congress leaders has been ruling over the state, those who were either Congress activists or student leaders during the independence movement have either been languishing in isolation or waging a protracted war to keep Congress out of power.

Mahatab's rise in Orissa politics in 1940s at the cost of senior leaders heralded the beginning of two things. First, manipulation as an instrument of dominating the power game proved to be a success. Mahtab quickly mastered the game of manipulation. He showed his uncommon skill in manipulating things in his favour. As a result he could floor down many better-known and senior players on the mat. One after another important Congress leaders like Nilakantha Das, Godavarish Mishra and others either left the party or remained defeated and disgruntled within it.

Secondly, Mahatab introduced corruption systematically in politics. Not that there was no corruption in public life before he held the reins of power. In general, there was respect for virtue and demerit, and corruption was considered a social crime. Mahtab apparently gave a new dimension to corruption. He seemed to make it an instrument not only to feather his own nest, but also to sustain a system and a regime. In other words, he

made corruption a part of the public life. No longer were things like lies, deceptions, betrayal, scandals as well as scandalising violence, making black money and buying votes treated bad things in life. Buying votes and support in politics was dressed with a good term – patronage –, and give-and-take dealings with businessmen and others who eulogised as "bargaining culture" – an important feature of the Western politics. However, what Mahtab did in Orissa was not something isolated. It was a part of the general phenomenon newly emerging all over India after Congress leaders began tasting power even during the British days. These tendencies had luxuriant growth after independence. Development and corruption became intimate companions walking side by side. Two chief lieutenants of Mahtab, who later turned against him – Biju and Biren – so to say, institutionalised political corruption.[10] Corruption charges have been levelled against Mrs. Nandini Satapathy and Binayak Acharya. Two senior Congress leaders who have come out unscathed in this respect are Sadasive Tripathy and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the Deputy Chief Minister from 1967 to 1970. They were known for their simplicity and honesty, and their personal integrity has hardly ever been questioned. The present Congress government in the state headed by J. B. Patnaik is widely believed to be indulging in deep corruption. Through an ex-State Minister, known as the "super Chief Minister", he has allegedly amassed a lot of wealth. It is interesting to note that J. B. Patnaik was a close associate of Mahtab for a long time and he entered into politics in early 1970s as a Mahtab protege. In view of Mahtab's role as a skilled practitioner of the techniques of manipulation and corruption in politics, it would not be wrong to describe him as the heralder of the era of "new politics" in Orissa.

Great Betrayal

The Congress people in Orissa have faced at times, a dilemma – to choose between the interests of their state and those of centre. As said earlier, in pre – 1936 period, such a dilemma threatened to destroy Congress in Orissa. There was a strong suspicion prevailing among Oriyas that the Central leadership of the Congress was not sympathetic to their cause – formation of Orissa as a

separate state—because the Congress people of bigger states like Bihar, Madras, West Bengal and Central Provinces were opposed to the birth of Orissa.[11] When the central leadership of the party directed to Orissa unit to postpone the movement for Orissa and fight for India's independence, a group of the Congress people of Orissa feared that the position taken by the All India Congress Committee was shaped by the pressure of the above states which contained many Oriya-speaking areas which, Oriyas demanded, should be taken away from these states and combined to form the separate Orissa. These people, under the leadership of Madhu Sudan Das, advocated that the cause of Orissa deserved first priority and should be accorded precedence over the cause of India's freedom. It was an agonising moment for devoted Oriya Congress leaders like Gopabandhu Das. He had to take a lot of pain to convince his people that these two questions were not in opposition to each other, but it was the duty of every Congressman to keep in freeze, for the time being, local issues, and join with others in fighting for the freedom of the country. Gopabandhu's credential as a true believer in the cause of a separate Orissa was subjected to severe strain and, for some time, the prospect of the Congress in Oriya-speaking areas was clouded.

Another severe test for the Congress party of Orissa was the border delimitation question of 1956. The States Reorganization Commission set up by the Government of India ignored the genuine claim of Orissa and awarded Sareikala and Kharasuan, two Oriya—majority areas, to Bihar. Almost all Oriyas, irrespective of their party affiliations, strongly suspected that the award of the Commission was prejudiced due to the heavy pressure of Bihar Congress leaders including Rajendra Prasad, the President of India. This led to the outbreak of a spontaneous agitation all over Orissa, and the Congress government of Orissa was faced with a bitter dilemma—whether to support the agitation or to suppress it. It was pressurised by the vast majority of Oriyas including many Congressmen, to resign, and it seemed that it was about to do that. Naba Krishna Choudhury, the Chief Minister, went to New Delhi presumably to make the last attempt to convince the Central Government of the genuine grievance of Orissa. It was widely believed that if he failed in his effort, his government would resign. But contrary to this speculation, Choudhury, on

his return, resorted to heavy handed measures to suppress the agitation, although the Central leadership did not concede to his demand for the reconsideration of the question of Sareikala and Kharasuan. *Choudhury was a good man, but he was a weak leader.* He lacked guts to face situations. So were many other Congress leaders of the state. They sacrificed the genuine cause of Orissa because they did not want to leave power or even their party over this moral question. In the name of the unity of India, they sacrificed the vital interests of Orissa, because they were not sure of their existence outside the Congress which had given them power as well as many other privileges and benefits. *The history would record that it was a great betrayal on the part of the Orissa Congress.*

Another instance of the alleged failure of the Congress government of Orissa to safeguard the interest of the state is dillydallying on the part of the Central Government in setting up the second steel plant at Paradeep. The experts committee favoured Orissa to have the second steel plant and the place chosen for this was Paradeep. The centre accepted this recommendation. In the mean time Andhra (then ruled by the Congress government, preceding the NTR regime) put pressure upon the centre to shift the steel plant from Paradeep to Vizag. As Andhra has more influence than Orissa in New Delhi, the Central Government seemed to have second thoughts about the proposed steel plant at Paradeep. It is not difficult to find out why in regard to inter-state differences involving Orissa the centre has invariably tended to go against it, especially when the Congress is in power both in New Delhi and Bhubaneswar. In the democratic politics of India based upon the number game, Orissa, having only 21 members in the Lok Sabha, has much less leverage *vis-a-vis* the centre than its adjoining states like Andhra and Bihar which send much larger contingents to the Lok Sabha.

Factionalism

The Orissa unit of Congress has almost always been plagued by factional conflict.[12] Even at the time of elections when the unity of the party is highly desirable, it is not free of factionalism. Each faction tries to get as many of its supporters elected as

possible. If some of its supporters fail to get the party nomination, they are covertly encouraged and helped to contest in the election as Independent candidates. Factional infighting pervades nomination as well as election. Each faction tends to work against the candidates of the other faction. If necessary, it would not hesitate to join hands with the Opposition to defeat the candidates of the other faction. In 1961 Assembly elections, Biju Patnaik complained that H. K. Mahtab and his supporters who constituted the minority group in the Congress worked against the official candidates in many constituencies.[13] It was alleged that Mrs. Satapathy, in 1974, gave most of the tickets to her supporters and denied the same to those who were known to be opposed to her[14] and/ or who were close to Binayak Acharya and others who were not happy with her leadership. Similarly, in 1980, J. B. Patnaik and R. C. Rath, who were then friends, helped their supporters in getting most of the party tickets while only a few of the supporters of K. C. Lenka, who was the main rival of Patnaik for the party leadership were selected as party candidates for the Assembly election.

In general, factionalism has little to do with ideology. It is mostly personality–oriented and born and nourished by power-hankering. Generally, the Congress party consists of two factions whose leaders swear by the same ideology—the ideology of the Congress (whatever it may mean). Moreover, the leaders of both factions claim to be loyal to the central leadership, although one of these factions may have a lot of grievances against it and internally complain against its bias in favour of the other faction. Till the last moment the Biju faction – incidentally the majority faction—did not openly criticise either Mrs. Gandhi or any other top leader of the Congress party for their open support to the minority faction led by Binayak Acharya and Mrs. Nandini Satapathy. Only after Biju Pattanaik and his friends were convinced that the High Command would not change its stand and would continue to back the anti—Biju faction, they left the party and opened their salvoes against the "bias" and "whims" of the central leadership.[15]

Factionalism in Orissa Congress has always been local in origin. Clash of interests between two important Congress leaders or two groups of Congress leaders of the state has generally

been the source of infighting in the party. The leaders of both sides seek the support of the High Command. The latter rarely goes by the merit of the case. Personal likes and dislikes seem to influence the attitudes of the High Command towards the rival factions in the state. Jawaharlal Nehru had personal liking for Naba Krishna Choudhary[16] for his simplicity and honesty. On the other hand, he had some reservations against H. K. Mahtab. So initially he did not like the idea of replacement of Choudhary by Mahtab as the Chief Minister of the state. But as the pressure—engineered by Mahtab himself—mounted in Orissa Congress for the return of Mahtab from the Bombay Raj Bhavan to Orissa politics, Nehru did not stand on the way of Mahtab stepping into the shoe of Choudhary. In spite his great personality and unchallenged leadership Nehru had a lot of respect for the state units of Congress and did not try to ride roughshod over them. But over the years the attitude of the central leadership towards the state units has radically changed. The latter have become puppets in the hands of the former. Their autonomy *vis-a-vis* the High Command has been greatly reduced. The Biju faction was the majority group in the state Congress and in terms of membership, it enjoyed a big lead over the other faction headed by Mrs. Satapathy. But Indira Gandhi, who was seldom happy with Biju Pattanaik[17] and whose protege Mrs. Satapathy was, extended open encouragement to the minority faction. She did it in the face of the clear warning that the majority group would leave the party if she continued to ignore and humiliate them. The factional challenge to the government of J. B. Patnaik, spearheaded by R. C. Rath, then a Minister of state at the Centre and K. C. Lenka, an ex-Cabinet Minister, was brought to an end apparently as a result of the intervention by the High Command. The latter perhaps thought that the continuation of factionlism was a serious danger to the party as a whole. The Rath-Lenka faction had been weekened, but the internal discontent and hostility against the government continued though under the surface. It is thus apparent that the High Command has emerged as the sole arbiter of the factional conflict in the state Congress.

Conclusion

Congress is the most important political party in Orissa, but its

dominance over other parties is not decisive, overwhelming and assured. Because of its heritage, its capacity to distribute patrong, and vast resources it can mobilize at the time of elections, Congress is sure of getting a substantial amount of votes. But the anti-Congress sentiment in Orissa is quite strong and at least half of the voters tend to back the Opposition. But as the Opposition votes are distributed and scattered among several parties, the Congress is able to win a majority, to the Assembly. If sometimes it fails to win absolute majority, it still manages to form a government with the explicit or implicit support of some Opposition parties. The disunity among Opposition parties has proved to be of great help to the Congress over the years since independence. If they can manage to put up a united front against the Congress, the electoral strength of the latter is likely to be seriously undermined.

Congress, the party of Mahatma Gandhi, is still to go a long way to establish ' Ram Raja" – the ideal land dreamt by him. The poor have mostly remained poor. Not enough has been done to improve the status and condition of Harijans and Adivasis. The number of ideal people in the party on continuous decrease and the number of those who are in the party not so much for its ideal as for the advantages and benefits that it can confer is on steady increase. If has become a shelter place for many touts, black-marketeers, and other anti-social elements who flourish in the name of Gandhi and the freedom movement. It is not intended here to give the impression that it is the only political party to have gone down in moral standard. On the other hand, it seems that moral degradation has become an important characteristic of all political parties, though not in equal proportion. In the case of Congress, however, it becomes very glaring because, of all parties in India, it has the most glorious heritage contained many honest and dedicated people, and it has been in power both at the centre and in states much longer than any other party.

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3. J. K. Mohapatra, *Factional Politics in India*, (Chugh Publications, Allahabad, 1985), Chapter 4
4. Mr. Luxman Mallik, an important Congress leader in Orissa, is at present a member of the Lok Sabha, and Mr. Prahallad Mallick was an important member of the State Unit of Janata Party and closealy of Biju Patnaik. He has recently joined the Congress.
5. Biju was interested in becoming a minister in the Coalition government headed by Mahtab. But Mahtab kept him away from power.

   See Biju Pattanaik's letter dated 11 February, 1952 to Mahtab.
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COMMUNIST PARTIES IN ORISSA

J. K. Boral
Smita Mishra

Orissa is one of the most backward states in India. It is very poor. In respect of socio-economic development, it stands at the bottom of the ladder. In many parts of the states feudalism is still deeply entrenched. In some areas capitalism has started to appear. In the last few years Orissa has been passing through rapid industrialisation. Thus there are vast contingents of mostly organised industrial workers and unorganised labourers in Orissa, which provides some ideal conditions for the emergence of strong communist organisations in it. However, communism has not made much strides in Orissa. The main objective of our study is to examine the factors which have inhabited the rich growth of communism in Orissa. It is proposed to study the circumstances in which communism was born in this state and its role and performance.

Most of the leading communists of earlier days belonged to the Congress and some of them were office-bearers of the Congress organisation. But in course of time they started feeling disenchanted that the Congress ideology and strategy would not make Indians better and happier. They feared that the Congress might win India's independence from the British, but that was not the sure road to freedom from poverty. In course of time all those Congress members and supporters who believed in Marxism, mobilised themselves, detached themselves from the Congress and formed the Communist Party of India in 1925. After eleven years the party came into existence in Orissa in 1936. The founder members of the Orissa Unit were Bhagabati Panigrahi, Prananath Patnaik and Gurucharan Patnaik.

Bhagabati Panigrahi belonged to Biswanathpur of Puri district. He came of a rich Brahmin family. Having passed M.A. from the Patna University, he joined the War of Indian Independence. He translated the Communisty Mamifesto of Karl Marx into Oriya

and wrote powerful short stories depicting class-conflict. Prananath Patnaik belonged to a lower middle class Karan family of a village near Khurda. He studied in the Kasi Vidyapith and was greatly influenced by its Principal, Acharya Narendra Dev, who was a pioneer of socialist thought and movement in India. Patnaik joined politics after passing M. A. He became a Congress M. L. A. in 1936-37 and was again elected as M. L. A. on a Communist ticket from Khurda in 1961. Gurucharan Patnaik belonged to Chanahat village of Puri district. He hailed from a feudal Karan landlord family. A student of Kasi Vidyapith, he was influenced profoundly by Acharya Narendra Dev's socialist ideas. He was a member of the Congress Socialist Party before he took the lead in founding the C. P. I. in Orissa. It is important to note that all these three pioneers of the party belonged to Puri district and hailed from the middle class and dominant castes in the states, that is, Brahmin and Karan. *Thus this proletariat party in Orissa had, in a way, bourgeiois origin.*

Orissa, theoretically, was an ideal ground for the communist ideology to be tried. The antique class system with its ramifications, the wide economic gap between the microscopic haves of feudal princes, zamindars and their henchmen, and the large mass of peasantry and the backwardness of the people in general virtually called for sowing of the seeds of communism. But strangely not till the end of 1936, was the party unit formed in Orissa.

Soon after its formation on 9 December 1936, the party tried to project its ideas to bring a revolution in the political, social and economic fields in Orissa. On 10 July 1940, the Government arrested all the Communist leaders of Orissa on charges of a conspiracy. But the leaders were released, after the C. P. I. declared the war to be a peoples' war, in an effort to mobilise public support to the war efforts. Bhagabati Panigrahi who was the first General Secretary of the C. P. I., Orissa, unfortunately died at a very early age in 1943. Sarat Pattnaik officiated as the Secretary of the Party in Orissa in 1943 and later handed over the responsibility to Gurucharan Pattnaik, who continued to be the Secretary till 1958.

The Roll Call

In the initial stage, the party in Orissa was led by Sarat Pattnaik,

Bidyanath Rath, Banamali Das, Durga Charan Mohanty and Ananta Pattnaik, besides the "three musketeers" mentioned earlier. The spread of communism in Orissa was slow and gradual. Giridhari Panda of Balasore, Sadhu Charan Mohanty, Gokul Mohan Roychudamani, Parsuram Padatika Roy, Gangadhar Paikroy, Laxman Pattnaik, Digambar Harichandan, Raghunath Das, Jagannath Mohanty and Jugal Kishore Pattnaik of Puri District, Krupasindhu Khuntia, Ramchandra Mishra, Salem Ahmed, Bhabagrahi Pati and Manmohan Mishra of Cuttack, Govinda Pradhan, Bijoy Chandra Das and Harihar Das of Ganjam district worked devotedly, and against heavy odds tried to spread the party in Orissa at this stage. It is strange but true that the Communist movement was limited to the coastal districts of Orissa and could not capture the popular imagination of the more backward, former feudal states, the tribal areas of Phulbani or the western districts of the state of Orissa.

The C. P. I. in Orissa from the beginning tried to influence the intellectual class from among the haves; the peasants, the industrial workers and the students were wooed.

The C. P. I. Strategy in Orissa

There might be an element of truth in the allegations about the extra-territorial loyalty of the party. But it cannot be denied that the C. P. I. has tried to bring a qualitative change in the class structure of the country. It is a close-knit cohesive cadre-based party based on scientific principles.

The workers of the party are scrutinised by the hierarchy of the party sufficiently long for their sincerity before they are encadered. They are then classed as Associate Members for a few years of observation and finally issued cards. The card-holders of the party carry a special status and responsibility. They are trained in the theory and practice of Communism, Marxism, Leninism and dialectical materialism in separate and regular classes periodically. The training is imparted by senior leaders of the C. P. I. In Orissa, such classes are held at different places for 30 days annually. These classes were taken by leaders like Mohit Sen, Achyuta Menon, B. T. Ranadive, Gurucharan Pattnaik, Sadananda Mohanty and others. Questions are asked

frankly and answers are furnished by the teachers.

To the intellectual class of the society, the C. P. I. makes special appeal through published literature. Books and journals published in Russia in attractive jackets, fine printing and paper are sold at throw-away prices. Newspapers and weekly/monthly magazines dealing with the theory and practice of the C. P. I. are published in Oriya language. The party started a paper called "Mukti-Yodha". It was followed by a weekly called "Krushak". The communists under the inspiration of Bhagabati Panigrahi formed an association called "Nabayug Sahitya Samsada". Manmohan Mishra and Ananta Pattnaik wrote poems and songs to rouse the people from their age-old slumber. Sachi Routray, an eminent Oriya poet, wrote a famous book "Baji-Rout" dealing with the death of an eight year old boat-man child at the cruel hands of the British army on the banks of Brahmani river at Bhudan in Dhenkanal district. This book was translated into English by Professor Harindra. N Chattopadhyaya and won world acclaim in the field of Literature. Manmohan Mishra used to melodiously sing patriotic songs composed by himself at the street corners and village weekly markets to admiring crowds.

In the field of peasant movement the party made a great contribution. The CPI organised a peasant movement in Nilagiri State in Balasore district under the leadership of Banamali Das. In Ganjam district. Gobinda Pradhan and Harihar Das of Aska organised peasant movement against Mustadari system prevailing in Bargarh, Sheragarh, Sanakhemundi, Badakhemundi and Dharakote Zamindaris. At Patia, near Bhubaneswar in Puri district, CPI organised a farmer's movement to demand the construction of an embankment.

The party organised the trade union movement among the industrial labourers. Colliery association under Krupasindhu Khuntia was formed in Sambalpur. The Cuttack press workers' Union was formed in Cuttack, then capital of Orissa, by Baidyanath Rath and Sarat Pattnaik. In Orient Paper Mills at Brajarajnagar a Workers' Union was formed under Communist leaders. The workers of Atabbira and Bargarh in Sambalpur district were organised by the CPI for their rights to better wages and prices. Rampur Colliery Union, Ib Colliery Union, Railway Labour Union and the Press Workers' Union of Berhampur were some of the

other Communist organised trade unions. It can be asserted with some amount of justifiable pride by the CPI that it greatly helped in bringing the trade union movement to Orissa labour.

The communists formed the Students' Federation of India and kept intimate contact with the students. Baidyanath Ratha, Gangadhar Rath, Nirupama Pattnaik (Now Rath) and others gave the lead with their fiery speeches. Bijoya Chandra Dash and Sadananda Mohanty of Berhampur took the leadership of the students' movement in Ganjam. The activities of the party belonged mainly to the student community, They organised processions and strikes in 1946 as a token of support to the revolt of the Royal Navy-Ratings in Bombay in February 1946.

The role of Communists in the merger of the princely states of Orissa was crucial. Many agitations for this were staged by the CPI led by Ramachandra Mishra, Baishnab Pattnaik and Ananta Pattnaik. The Communists were actively associated with the Praja-Andolan Organisation in different princely states. The merger movement was organised in Nilagiri by Banamali Das, in Dhenkanal by Baishnaba Pattnaik, in Athgarh by Braja Pattnaik, in Talcher by Srinibas Mishra in Ranapur by Banamali Ram and in Bolangir by Yudhisthir Mishra. They demanded the confiscation of all the moveable and immoveable property of feudal princes. They opposed the sovereignty and inviolability of kings. The CPI demanded the end of the feudalistic hegemony. The agitations in Dhenkanal, Nilagiri, Ranapur and Talcher took violent turns and the Police had to resort to indiscriminate firing at each of the places to quell the disturbances. The political agent of the British Government, Mr. Bezelgate, was assasinated by a mob in Ranapur. In the subsequent Bazelgate murder case, Raghunath Mohanty and Dibakar Parida, two young peasant activists, were sentenced to death by hanging.

The Communists did not take part in the Orissa elections before Independence. Prananath Pattnaik had been elected to the Orissa Assembly in 1936-37 as a Congress candidate. The Communist Party of India entered the first electoral battle in 1952.

Independence

Freedom came to India at the midnight of 14th August 1947. The

CPI Central Committee met in June 1947 and pledged full support to the national leadership for the proud task of building the Indian Republic on democratic foundations, and welcomed the new opportunities for national advancement. But apparently the CPI had not consulted Moscow. In the middle of 1947, Soviet theoreticians Dyakov and Balabuscheiveh declared that the Nehru Government represented both big and middle burgeoisie which were "reactionary" and "imperialistic". It did not take CPI long to declare that Jawaharlal was "supporting" the reactionary clique and had capitulated to imperialism. This was followed by violent Telengana movement and mob uprisings: The CPI adopted a policy of armed insurrection and the national government had to take severe repressive measures.

Peasant Movement

In Orissa, Harekrushna Mahatab had formed the ministry after independence. In following the Ranadive line, there were violent peasant uprisings led by the CPI in Takarada on 24th May 1948 and the police opened fire on the mass, killing 4 women including a girl of thirteen, and two men.[6]

Takarada is a small village under Shergarh Zamindari of Ganjam district. Ganjam district had many Zamindaris like Parlakhemundi, Khallikote, Dharakote, Badamhemandi, Sanakhemandi, Chikiti, Shergarh and Baragarh etc. The Zamindars were intermediaries between the Government and the peasants. The Zamindars were called "Rajas". They appointed Mustadars as their gents. The Mustadars were operating in small areas into which a Zamindari was divided. The Mustadars engaged the peasants and landless farmers as share-croppers. Such peasants were expected to till the land, sow the seed and apply manure and fertiliser at their cost. But the yield of the land was to be shared between the Mustadar and the farmer in the ratio of 3:2, the Mustadar getting the larger share by virtue of being an agent of the Raja. The farmers were expected to serve the Mustadar by a system of free contributory labour called "Bethi".

Govinda Pradhan, himself a medium landlord and the son of a Mustadar, was the leader of peasants in Shergarh Aska area. He organised the farmers and trained them assiduously over a period

of many years. The usually timid and weak farmers were trained in bravery and unity. Even women, illiterate and backward as they were, were organised to demand their just share of fruits of their labour.

Shortly after Independence, the peasants of Shergarh refused to share their crops in the traditional ration of 3:2, but demanded the ratio of 1:1. This was treated as a rebellion.

The farmers were also organised secretly to fight the police, if necessary. Small village meetings held under the darkness of nights decided the strategy. It was not an accident that the strategy adopted at Shergarh was similar to that adopted in Telengana. The farmers were trained to use lathis, bamboo sticks, sickles and other farm implements as weapons of defence. The wives and daughters of the farmers were trained to use kitchen equipments—as weapons of offence. A system of signalling the approach of enemy, by beating of drums, hidden on the leafy tree tops, was devised and standardised.

Govinda Pradhan fought for the poor peasants whereas Biswanath Das, a big land-lord of the district and an ex-prime Minister and Ex-Chief Minister of Orissa, led the Ryot Sabha which championed the interests of rich peasants. Pradhan was to contend with three enemies whose interests appeared to be complementery. He had to face the fury of the Zamindar of Sheragada who was the richest man of the area and also influenced the Congress government to take repressive action against Pradhan and other Communists. Pradhan had also to contend with Biswanath Das who claimed to fight against the Zamindars of the area but who himself was a big land owner, no less rich than any Zamindar of the district. Moreover, one of the top leaders of the Congress party, Das was a powerful force which Pradhan had to counter. Further the Congress party as well as the Congress government of the state led by Harekrushna Mahatab perceived in the peasant agitation led by Communists a great danger to the Congress supremacy in state politics. Therefore Mahatab became anxious to suppress Pradhan's agitation in Sheragada area. He feared that unless it was nipped in the bud, it would spread to other parts of the state and would then be unmanageable. Mahatab himself came to Sheragada, became a guest of Sheragada Zamindar, addressed a public meeting organised by the zamindar and

allegedly master minded the governmental including the police operations against the Communists.

The peasant agitation in Ganjam district took a sharp turn in the summer of 1948 when the police entered Takarada village to arrest some CPI activists. The villagers, both men and women, *en masse* gheraoed the police vehicle and did not allow them to whisk away their villagers and friends. The situation became tense and the police started firing as a result of which several villagers, both male and female died on the spot. The death toll included a 13 year old girl named Hema. She was a flower of revolution whose fragrance quickly spread to nearby areas. For some time large parts of Ganjam district were caught by the wild fire of the peasant agitation. The peasant agitation at Nimapara in Puri district was nurtured by Sadhu Charan Mohanty and Mohan Das. The peasant movement in Begunia and Bolagarh threw up Gangadhar Paikroy as a leader.

The Communist-formed All Orissa Kisan Sabha demanded the rights of share-croppers to the land they tilled, abolition of free contributory labour called 'Bethi', prevention of change of farmers of a particular land by the owners, and land to the landless. The communists also attached "Mahajani", the system by which village money-lenders operated at sky-high interest rates and usurped the lands of the poor unsuspecting and simple farmers. The Government was finally compelled to legislate and check the oppression of village money-lenders.

In the field of peasant agitation, the Orissa CPI has made deep inroads and neither the Congress nor any other party has been a patch on them. But even then the peasant movement is limited to some parts of Balasore, Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam districts. The movement has not even touched the tribal districts of Phulbani and Kalahandi. Geographically the Communist movement has been intense in the coastal districts and industrial towns and cities of Orissa.

Labour Movement

Communism was born for the blue collared workers primarily. It is but natural that trade unions at different industrial units should be guided by Communists in Orissa. The Communist

Party of India took the lead in the All India Trade Union Congress from 1930 and made it a fighting force. Its bargain with the capitalist owners has not always been peaceful. Oppression, dismissal and vindictive attitude of the management have been answered with gherao, bandh, strikes, stone-throwing and acid hurling.

In the days before independence, Orissa had practically no industry and so no industrial labour. The Communist Party organised the labour of collieries and private printing presses.

Krupasindhu Khuntia, an organiser of the workers of Calcutta Electrical Supply Company came over to Orissa to organise the Orient Paper Mill Union and the Colliery Union in Sambalpur district in 1945. CPI also organised the weavers and dyers at Bargarh and Atabira. Gangadhar Paikroy organised the weavers of Bolgarh and Begunia in Puri district. A Weavers Union was also formed in Ganjam district by Govinda Pradhan. The Primary Teachers Association, Berhampur Press Workers Union, Huma Salt Workers Union, Mayurbhanj Motor Workers Union, Balasore Press Workers Union, Utkal Journalist Association and other associations and unions were gradually formed by Ramachandra Ram, Durga Charan Mohanty, Ramachandra Mishra, Ramakrushna Pati and other CPI leaders.

In course of time the pace of industrialisation started crawling from stillness. Sadananda Mohanty organised Jayashri Chemical Workers Union at Ganjam; Dwarikanath Mishra organised the Talcher Colliery Union, Talcher Thermal Workers Union and the Fertilizer Worker Union, Harichandra Buxipatra organised the Hindusthan Aeronautics Labour at Sunabeda in Koraput.

But unlike the field of peasant movement, many political parties, notably the All India Congress and the Socialist party took keen interest in the labour movement. Indian National Trade Union Congress of the Congress party and the Hind Mazdoor Sabha of the Socialist Party were the rivals of All India Trade Union Congress for the favour of the Orissa Labour.

Student Movement

The CPI was one of the first political parties in India to realise and conceive the role that students can play in a revolution. Youth

has an element of daring and ideology. The CPI decided to use the sense of fair play inherent in the young to activise them to dare where others had failed. The formation of the Students Federation of India by the CPI was a means to employ this strategy. Only the young can dare to demolish the old traditions, bondage and system and succeed in creating new ones.

The Orissa Students' Movement was initially directed by Nabakrushna Choudhury, a Socialist of the Congress Party and Nandini Satapathy, Sadananda Mohanty, Prabir Palit, Gangadhar Rath, Nirupama Pattnaik (later Rath) and Baidyanath Rath were active members of the Students Federation of India. Though they did not join the Communist party of India at any time, Nilamani Routroy, Janki Ballav Pattnaik and Rama Chandra Rath as student leaders were helped and supported by the Students Federation of India at times for their own causes.

The students of Orissa have been the first to raise their voice against injustice and oppression. Whether the move for unification of outlying areas into one political and administrative unit of Orissa or remove corruption from the political field, the Orissa students have always given the lead.

Communists in Legislature

Communists in India have accepted multi-party democracy through the ballot box. The CPI entered the General Elections in 1952 as a party and their manifesto called for replacement of the Congress Government of all democratic parties, groups and individuals representing workers, peasants, middle classes and national bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie that stands for genuine industrialisation of the country for the freedom and independence of India.
In Orissa, CPI won seven out of 140 Assembly seats and one out of 20 Lok Sabha seats by polling 5.68 percent of the polled votes. In the second General Election, 1957, the CPI improved its position by capturing 9 Assembly seats and one Lok Sabha seat by polling 8.39 percent of the total votes polled. In the 1957 elections, though the Congress won 56 seats, it formed the government by questionable means. But the ministry did not last long and it resigned in May 1959. A Congress-Ganatantra Parishad coalition government under the leadership of Harekrushna Mahtab

was formed but was dissoved after one year and nine months in February 1961. In the following Assembly Elections in 1961, the CPI got only 4 seats. Biju Pattnaik formed the ministry on 23rd June 1961 with 82 Congress members to support the Government. It is important to note that in the 1961 elections, though CPI got only 4 seats it improved its percentage of polled votes from 8.39 to 14.13.

The split in the Communist Party occurred in 1964. After the formation of the CPI(M), some prominent leaders like Banamali Das, Shivaji Pattnaik, B. M. Patnaik, and Nagabhusan Patnaik left the CPI to form CPI(M) in Orissa. The departure of Banamali Das, who was an able parliamentarian and effective organiser, from the party was a great blow to it. The ablest Parliamentarian produced by the CPI, was probably Sadananda Mohanty. With his forceful arguments and charming wit he usually commanded respect, and dignity in the Assembly. Lokenath Choudhury was the leader of the Communist Legislative party in Orissa for a long time. Ramakrushna Pati, Prasana Kumar Panda and Biswanath Sahu were also able parliamentarians carrying the house with them during the debates.

Historically, Orissa has had unstable governments. Not a single ministry was able to complete its full tenure of five years till 1980. Therefore the minor parties exercised great influence in the formation of governments and effective say in the day-to-day adminstrations. The CPI, being a cohesive and disciplined political unit, at times played a decisive role in the state administration. Generally the party followed a policy of "critical co-operation" rather than that of sustained hostility with the Congress Party and the governments formed by it. But the CPI was openly hostile to the feudal parties like the Ganatantra Parishad and the governments with which the Parishad was associated.

In 1957, the CPI supported the Congress government of Harekrushna Mahtab with the hope that a leader of his stature could introduce measures which would help the mass of peasants and workers. As a basic minimum, the CPI wanted government to fix taxes on Jagir lands of the feudal Rajas and to exempt land revenue of small farmers with less than two acres holding. The failure of the Government to categorically declare its acceptance of the demands caused the hostility of the CPI. CPI maintained

its open hostility to the subsequent Congress Ganatantra Parishad Government. So CPI organised students strike and labour unrest outside and attacked the "reactionary police" of government inside the Assembly. Thus the CPI, though indirectly, helped Biju Patnaik to power. It is probable that Biju Patnaik had promised to CPI certain land reform measures after the elections. But the landslide majority gained by the Congress in 196 did not force the Biju Patnaik or the subsequent Biren Mitra and Sadasiva Tripathy ministries to oblige the CPI.

The CPI seemed to occupy the driver's seat during the two spells of the Nandini Satapathy government between 1972 and 1976. Nandini Satapathy was a "former card-holding Communist" and a confidant of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The Congress Govt. needed the support of the CPI, both at the centre and the state for its survival and the CPI was only too willing to go the whole way. Certain legislative measures were taken at that period in tune with the avowed aims of CPI. But the price paid by the CPI was too much. The CPI supported the Emergency measures of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi during 1975-77 for which it had to suffer a lot later.

This caused loss of popular support to the CPI which was evident in the General Elections of 1977. But the CPI(M) which opposed the emergency picked up popularity. In the prestigious Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat, Shivaji Pattnaik, General Secretary of the CPI(M) was elected as the lone CPI(M) member from Orissa. The CPI and CPI(M) got one seat each in the Assembly Election of 1977.

But within three years the Janata Party, which won a landslide victory in 1977 was doomed with internal squabble and personal rivalry. The General Elections of 1980 saw a swing of popular votes to the Congress Party which promised a "government that works". The CPI again fared badly. It could not get a single Lok Sabha seat in Orissa. In the Assembly it could get only 4 seats. The elections since independence indicate that the communists of all branches do not catch the popular imagination in Orissa.

The Split in Orissa

The Communist Party started well but failed to maintain the momen-

tum. This was due to a lack of unity of purpose and a sense of inner party cohesion. The rightists group within it found common cause with the leftist group of the Congress Party whereas its left group gradually got disillusioned with it. The breaking point came in 1964. It was unthinkable for the latter to think of any sort of coalition, explicit or otherwise, with Congress. The peaceful Parliamentary path was strewn with opposing thorns, the leftists alleged. Banamali Das, Shivaji Pattnaik, Ramesh Chandra Panda, D. B. M. Pattnaik and Nagabhusan Patnaik left the CPI and formed the CPI(M).

In 1969, the CPI(M) was again split. Those who regarded Naxalbari activists as true Communists assembled on the birth anniversary of Lenin in 1969 (22 April) and set up a party guided by Chairman Mao's thoughts for the completion of the revolution. A sizeable member of CPI(M) activists (about 200) mostly from Ganjam, Koraput, Balasore and Puri joined the CPI (M) party.

CPI (ML) in Orissa

DBM Patnaik and Nagabhusan Patnaik took the lead in the CPI (ML) formation. They asserted that revolutionary power grows from the barrel of a gun and not through peaceful transition of parliamentary democracy. The revolutionaries started propagating Naxalism among the peasants of Koraput. They advocated physical annihilation of the rich landlords and looting of their property in cash and kind for ultimate distribution among the poor. About 80 such murders took place in Gunupur and nearby areas.

But this violence was suppressed by ruthless police activity and indifferent public support. Three Naxalites were killed at Betarsingh, a village about 6 kms from Ramgiri, by a police party of eight. One of the Naxalites was an Andhraite and two others were tribals of Koraput district. They were resting on a hill slope after committing a successful annihilation of a 'Sahukaar' or money-lender in the nearby village. The ruthless police actions terrorised local tribals from extending support to Naxalites. The initial support of the tribals of Koraput and Ganjam districts to Naxalites evaporated since the movement failed to spread to other tribal areas. To some extent, the involvement of some known antisocial elements in the Naxalites movement made it unpopular

among the people. The rich and conservative people who anyway would have opposed it took this opportunity to malign it disproportionately. Thus the Naxalities came to bear a social stigma as a "Party of thieves and murderers" in a short time. The traditional and conservative society failed to accept the revolution and the revolutionaries. The Naxalite movement failed in Orissa, as in other places because the groundwork was insufficiently made, the people were not trained or kept ready to accept the revolution. The Chinese plant failed to grow on the Orissa soil.

But despite the failure of the CPI(ML) it has to be acknowledged that seldom before had any party of Orissa had as dedicated a set of leaders as Nagabhusan Patnaik, DBM Patnaik, Gananath Patro, Subbarao Panigrahi, Rameshchandra Sahu and Chinababu. The last named three were killed in police encounters and Nagabhusan Patnaik is now seriously sick though still trying to revolutionize the mass.

Conclusion

The Communists in Orissa have failed to make much headway due to the following factors. Most of communist leaders hailed/hail from the elite stratum of the society. Thus there is a credibility gap between such leaders with bourgeois origin and the followers who, in general, are proletariats. In the name of revolution, same communist leaders have grown rich. At least in the eyes of the public, they have become corrupt and dishonest. In order to reach the mass, they have to change this image. The alien origin of communists is a great obstacle for their progress. They have to establish an indigenous identity for themselves. On several occasions the CPI—the most important communist group in Orissa—has followed a policy of "Opportunism". The most obvious was the CPI's tacit alliance with the Congress led by Nandini during the Emergency. The Communists, who claim to follow a scientific ideology and have a deep commitment to the upliftment of the poor, should not be victims of narrow interest.

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15

SOCIALIST PARTIES IN ORISSA

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Of the Congress Socialists of 1930s, some stayed with the Congress, some left Congress and formed the Communist Party, and some others built another party called the Praja Socialist Party just in the aftermath of Independence. The beginning of the PSP in Orissa was very promising. Its leaders, in general, were of high intellectual calibre, and men of determination and dedication. But this promise has not materialised. The party continued to fare poorly in election after election except in 1967 which was characterised by a strong wave of anti-congressism. No wonder, in early 1970s the PSP fell by the way side, although a few other socialists retained their political identity for some time more, though without any significant performance. The following is an attempt to study the evolution of Socialists of all types as a political force in Orissa and their gradual decline and decay. Their electoral performance, their roles in labour and peasant fronts and their performance in legislatures both state and central will be critically examined. A large portion of the data used in this study was collected through interviews with many prominent leaders of the PSP and the Socialist Party.

Evolution of Socialists as a Political Force

As a political force the Socialists came into existence in the early 1930s. Some Congress leaders, while fighting along with others, for the freedom of the country, realised that another important goal of their movement was Socialism. They advocated that a free India should strive for social justice without which independence had little meaning. The Congress Socialist Forum consisting of people who believed in this was set up in 1934. Its leading figures were Jawaharlal Nehru, Jaya Prakash Narayan and others. But in course of time it became evident that Nehru

and other Congress people were not prepared to go the whole way with the people nourishing radical and progressive ideas. The Communists were the first to realise this and dissociate themselves from the Congress Socialist Forum and form their party. The Socialists, on the other hand, continued to stay till independence within the Congress. However, after 1947, they felt that the Congress "was not ready to work for socialism". Hence in 1948 they established the Socialist Party in India with eminent politicians like J. P., Ashok Mehta, R. Lohia and others.

Within a short period, the internal tension within the Socialist Party came to the surface. One group led by JP pinned their hopes on Gandhian techniques whereas the other group, led by Lohia, deemed Gandhism very weak to attain socialism, Lohia finally chose in 1955 to defect from the PSP and form a new party – Socialist Party – when Ashok Mehta argued that the Congress ideology, being based on nationalism, secularism and democracy, was closer to the Socialists. On the other hand, Lohia believed in the "equidistance between the Congress and the Communists".[1] After Ashok Mehta left the PSP to join Congress as a minister at the centre, the PSP and the Lohia Socialists merged to from Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP) in June 1964. But this merger collapsed only after six months and the two groups drifted from each other to remain as separate parties till 1971. In that year again all Socialists came together to form one party which ultimately ceased to exist when it merged with the Janata Party in 1977.

Like the Socialists at the all India level, those of Orissa had to pass through the cycle of splits and mergers. However, in Orissa, most of them stayed with the PSP and only a few chose to side with Lohia. The most important leaders of the PSP in the state were S. N. Dwivedy, Rabindra Mohan Das, Banka Bihari Das and Nisamani Khuntia. The followers of Lohia in Orissa included Rabi Ray, Narayan Sahu and Kisan Pattanaik. The Lohia group was practically a non-entity in the state. It was only in 1967 – the year of anti-congressism – that Ray and K. Pattanaik were elected to the Lok Sabha. But their victory was not the true indicator of their influence in the state. They just rode the strong waves against the Congress. On the other hand, the PSP was always a force to reckon with, at least in the coastal belt of the

state and in Mayurbhanja district. Because of different factors discussed later, it failed to win a large number of seats in General Elections. But its hold over a large number of people of these areas was hardly in doubt. Before we analysed their roles in the post-independence period, it may be in order to briefly discuss their activities during the British days. Their history may provide a useful backdrop for studying their roles in free India.

In Orissa a socialist group was formed in October, 1933 entitled "Utkal Congress – Samyabadi (Socialist) worker's League", Its members included Nabakrushna Choudhury, Malati Choudhury, Surendra Nath Dwivedy, Sudhir Chandra Ghosh from Cuttack district, Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, Gangadhar Paikray from Puri, Banamali Moharana from Ganjam Rabindra Mohan Das and Gour Chandra Das from Balasore. Most of these personalities were young then. Like many young leaders of those days they were also deeply influenced by the Marxian philosophy. Like genuine Marxists they declared even to renounce private property. On a class line they started organising peasants, as a result of which the "Pradeshika Krushak Sangh" was formed. Harekrushna Mahatab was elected as its first Chairman. But he had soon to quit this post because of his firm faith in Gandhism. Gradually those Left-oriented activists started organising the labour in the province, and for the first time the "May Day" was observed in the State in 1934. A weekly paper called "Sarathi" was also brought out on this occasion. Subsequently this group merged with the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) as decided at a meeting of the group at Cuttack in September 1934.[2]

Like Indian Congress Socialists, they had little faith in Gandhian techniques and advocated new methods under the new leadership with a view to accomplishing nationalism. They also trenchantly criticised the "right wing" faction of the Indian National Congress.

The Congress Socialists were good freedom-fighters. A few of them played notable parts in waging the freedom struggle in the coastal belt, especially in Cuttack and Balasore districts. While Dwivedy went underground in Cuttack to avoid arrest and continued to work against the British government, Gaur Chandra Das, another prominent Congress Socialist, organised Satyagraha in schools and government offices of Balasore district to make the August movement of 1942 a success. Government offices

were set on fire and in September 1942 a "National Government" was proclaimed at Balasore.

More than their participation in the freedom movement, the role of Congress Socialists in the Praja Mandal Movement was of great significance. They organised, along with other activists, the agitations of the people against their oppressive rulers of the princely states of Nilagiri[3], Dhenkanal, Talcher, Mayurbhanja, Sonepur and Keonjhar etc. Narayan Chokra, the leader of the Keonjhar agitations[4], sought the help of the Congress which declined to extend help. Chokra than approached the Sociatists who promptly sent two of their ablest members—Rabindra Mohan Das and Gaur Charan Das for the purpose to Keonjhar. While they were about to complete a report on the police atrocities over the people. Sardar Patel's merger move became a sudden success and Keonjhar merged with Orissa in 1948.

A meeting of the Congress Workers sharing Socialist views was organised in Cuttack by Rama Nanda Mishra, when he visited Orissa in October 1946. A provincial committee consisting of S. N. Dwivedy as General Secretary, Banka Bihari Das as organisational Secretary and Rabindra Mohan Das, Gour Ch. Das, Rabi Ghosh and Nisamani Khuntia as members was formed. But as S. N. Dwivedy had not yet been relieved from the Secretaryship of the provincial Congress Party, Rabindra Mohan Das was appointed as the acting General Secretary.[5]

By 1947 the CSP had undertaken a decision at all India level to leave the Congress. Hence S. N. Dwivedy and other Socialist workers in Orissa left the Congress. S. N. Dwivedy organised the Socialist forces and established an office at Oriya Bazar (Jadunath Bhawan), Cuttack.

Electoral Performance

The fact that the PSP fielded a large contingent of candidates (78) for 140 seats in the Orissa Legislative Assembly signified that it was ambitious about its election prospect. However the result proved to be very disheartening for it. It was able to win only a few seats. Out of those 9, 4 were in Mayurbhanja district. 3 in Cuttack district while 1 each was won by it in Puri and Ganjam districts. It drew a blank in Balasore district which was

considered as one of its strongest bases. In the Lok Sabha election held in that year the party set 10 candidates, but it could win only one seat. The lone winner was Sarangadhar Das, a great leader of the Praja Mandal Movement and fighter against the brutality and oppression of the Dhenkanal King. Thus the result of the first General Election was a shock to the party which contained a good number of selfless and dedicated leaders as well as workers.

For the PSP, the second General Election held in 1957 did not prove any better. It, of course, fielded much fewer candidates than those it had fielded in 1952. But that did not yield any big dividends to it in terms of seats in the Assembly. While in 1952 the PSP had put up 78 candidates, in 1957 it put up only 45 candidates. But its gain in terms of seats was only 2. In 1952 it had secured 9 seats. In the 1957 Assembly election it gained 11 seats.

The performance of the PSP in 1961 mid-term elections to the Assembly was not much different from its performances in the earlier two elections. Out of 502 candidates in the fray, 44 belonged to the PSP which secured 11 out of 140 seats. It may be pertinent to point out that in this election the Congress led by Biju Patnaik won a huge majority mainly at the cost of the Ganatantra Parishad, so far the main opposition party in the state.

Out of 603 total candidates in Fourth General Elections of 1967 PSP hâd only 34 candidates. This time the party believed that less number of candidates could bring more success.

The party introduced certain changes in their election technique this time. Though it did not favour any alliance, still it preferred common propaganda. This time the party was mainly helped by enthusiastic youths. The PSP workers utilised all their available resources to defeat Biju Patnaik. Pamphlets and posters appeared against Biju Patnaik. Song books entitled "Pattanark Purana" highlighting the misdeeds of Patnaik were widely distributed. The Congress got a serious jolt in this election. It got only 31 seats, whereas the PSP got 21 seats. It became a morale booster for the party.

No party won conclusively in this election. The PSP (Utkal) declined to participate in the Swatantra led, Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition government in the state though in West Bengal and

Bihar the PSP joined in the non-Congress coalition governments. Writing to R. N. Singh Deo, President of the Orissa Swatantra Party and P. M. Pradhan, President of the Orissa Jana Congress, Rabindra Mohan Das, Chairman Utkal PSP said on 2nd March, 1967, "As regards our attitude, we have made it very clear before the electorate that we would in all possible manner facilitate the formation of a non-Congress government. We stand by that pledge. It is not correct to say that at any time our party or any of our spokesmen assured support to a Swatantra-led coaltion Government or the Swatantra-Jana Congress joint programme. We have announced our programme and issued our election manifesto on the basis of which people have elected our representatives to the legislatures". He said that his party would support the coalition Government on these issues.[6]

1971 proved to be a big blow to the Socialists of Orissa. Both PSP and the Socialist Party suffered miserable defeats at the hustings both in Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. They had fielded 50 and 15 candidates respectively in the Assembly Election. While the former managed to gain only 4 seats, the latter drew a blank. Further, neither of them could win a single seat in the Lok Sabha election held that year, although they had put up 6 and 2 candidates respectively. 1971 Assembly election was virtually a triangular contest among three parties, namely, the Congress (R), Utkal Congress and the Swatantra. The Socialists fared very poorly.

For most of the Praja Socialists, the 1971 elections were the "Waterloo". Unable to see any good future for the PSP in state politics, they wound up the party in 1972 and joined the Congress (R) which was then led by Mrs. Nandini Satapathy. For a few years they worked as a powerful pressure group within the Congress (R). But soon they found the going hard as Communists pressurized Mrs. Satapathy to keep Dwivedy and his friends at a distance. This created a lot of tension between Mrs. Satapathy and the PSP group within the Congress (R).

Though no comparison to the PSP in strength and influence, the Socialists decided to continue as a party under the leadership of Rabi Ray and Samarendra Kundu.[7] In 1974 Assembly Election they became a constituent of the Pragati Party which was apparently a powerful combination against the Congress (R). The

Samyukta Socialist Party fielded 17 candidates, but managed to win only 2 seats. During Emergency they actively participated in the struggle against the excesses of Mrs Gandhi's Government and after it was lifted, they merged themselves with the newly-formed Janata Party. It may be relevant to point out that in the Janata government at the centre, Ray became the Cabinet Minister for Health while Kundu was appointed as the Minister of State for External Affairs. They are still in the Janata party in spite of its heavy losses in the 1980 and 1984 elections.

Trade Union Activities

In spite of some very good leaders in its fold, the PSP failed to emerge as one of the dominant parties in Orissa. But it could establish itself as a powerful force in the trade union movement. Some of the best trade union leaders that the state has produced were are Socialists. The HMS, the labour organ of the PSP, is still an important force in the labour movement of the state. For example, RMS—Rourkela Majdoor Sangha—, has all these years remained the undisputed dominant union in the Rourkela Steel Plant. However, in some other areas like Chowdwar, the power of HMS has declined.

It was Dhuleswar Bastia, a young firebrand leader who started HMS unit in Talcher area. After his success there, he moved out to Rourkela in 1956 and began his trade union activities there. Under his leadership, RMS emerged as the most powerful union there. In a controversial situation he was killed in 1964 in a motorcycle accident. But his organisation did not die. His Deputy, Raja Kishore Samantaray, successfully took over the leadership of HMS at Rourkela and since then he continues to be its unchallenged leader. Another important leader of the HMS at Rourkela is Jagadish Nag, a Bengali of Midnapore area.

In coastal Orissa, the most important trade unionist among the Socialists was Nishamani Khuntia who was several times elected as the MLA from Tirtol. For nearly 20 years, he dominated the trade union scene at Paradeep. Both S. N. Dwivedy and Banka Bihari Das took some interest in the trade union movement, but their main interests lay elsewhere. Dwivedy continues to be the President of the RMS at Rourkela, but he is not very active there.

Biswanath Pandit, another veteran Socialist, was an important trade union leader in Cuttack—Chowdwar area. Another Socialist, who is active for last few years in the union politics of Cuttack area is Krishna Chandra Patra.

Mobilisation of Peasants

The Socialists of India were deeply concerned over the fate of peasants. They sincerely wanted to improve their condition by bringing about radical changes in the agrarian sector. As early as 1934 the progressive activists of Orissa some of whom later founded the Socialist Party in the state organised the peasants against the oppression of Zamindars. Soon after Independence, the Balasore conference of Utkal Socialist Party held in 1948 demanded the following: (1) implementation of cooperative farming (2), land to tillers, (3) change of share given to the share-croppers; and (4) consolidation of holdings. At that time, the Congress Government of Orissa found these proposals too tall and Utopian. One of the Socialists to have effectively mobilized peasants was Banamali Moharana of Ganjam district. Under his leadership, the peasants of Kodala area organised themselves for recognition of their rights on lands they tilled.[8] Narayan Sahu, another Socialist of Ganjam district, was also a notable peasant leader. Banka Bihari Das, one of the leading Socialists of the state, tried to mobilise peasants in the whole of the state. At the Bolangir conference of Utkal Socialist Party held in 1954, he directed the party workers to form Kissan Panchayats at every police station of the state. His aim was to inculcate in them the spirit of class consciousness and to provide them training about modern farming. But his scheme failed due to the lack of public interest and the failure of party activists to sincerely work for this.

Contribution as Parliamentarians

The Socialists in Orissa included a few brilliant parliamentarians. Whether it was in Orissa Legislative Assembly or in the Indian Parliament, they effectively articulated some important issues. They actively took part in discussions on various issues. Most

well known among them was S. N. Dwivedy, the leader of PSP in the Lok Sabha for several years. Built of intellectual mould, Dwivedy was always in focus in the Lok Sabha. One of his most important contributions as a parliamentarian was the exposure of the misdeeds of the Congress government in Orissa during Biju-Biren time. His heroic effort forced the centre to institute CBI inquiry into the allegations against the Biju - Biren group. Another important parliamentarian in the PSP party was Banka Bihari Das. He made his mark as a parliamentarian both in the Orissa Legislative Assembly and in the Parliament. Das was particularly strong in financial matters. His views on budgets were highly respected. Somarendra Kundu who, during 1977–1979, was the Minister of State for External Affairs, was a brilliant debator in the Lok Sabha. He expressed forcefully his party's determination to abolish the privy purse and other princely privileges. He observed on the floor of the Parliament : "Since 1948, my party has said that these provisions should be scrapped. We are actuated by the consideration that these kings and rulers did not have any such rights intrinsically".[9] Banka Bihari Das made a forceful speech in the Rajya Sabha in supporting the nationalisation of Banking and credit institutions.[10] He also expressed his party's grave concern over the Preventive Detention Bill which he described as an "anti-democratic measure" and a "pitch-black measure".[11]

Conclusion

The Socialists, as at the all India level, in Orissa too, started well. They were a bunch of well-motivated, articulate and dedicated activists, determined to bring about a progressive change in the country. Opposed to kings, zamindars and the privileged few, they aimed at attaining socialism. But, in the process, they soon found themselves in the midst of a serious crisis. They failed to have a distinct identity for themselves. On the one hand, they found it hard to distinguish themselves from Communists who also worked for radical social changes. On the other hand, their attachment to democracy and Gandhian ideals blurred their differences with the Congress Party which increasingly wore the look of socialism. Both the Communists and Socialists in Orissa

suffered as the Congress gradually turned some of the main demands of the former into its own policies and programmes, and as it co-opted some of their members/supporters into its fold. Further, in 1950—the early phase of post-independence period—when these Left parties could have strongly established themselves in Orissan politics, there came into being a regional feudal party—the Ganatantra Parishad. The latter spoiled their chance to grow strong by capitalising on the regional discontent and feudal loyalty of the people of Western Orissa. Against this background, the Socialists met a premature death in India, although there are still some individual Socialists occasionally excelling in different domains of politics.

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16

SUB-REGIONAL POLITICS IN ORISSA : A STUDY OF GANATANTRA PARISHAD

K. Banerjee

Ganatantra Parishad did not live long. It came into being on the eve of the First General Elections and lost its identity in early 1960s. Thus its life span was short, but it played a very active and significant role in the state politics during this brief period. In its debut it emerged as the second largest political party in the state and before long it forced the Congress, the ruling party, to share power with it. It is worth noting that even before it chose to merge in the Swatantra, it was still the second most important party in Orissa. Further, it had a few distinct features. It was both a feudal and a regional party. It is, therefore, in order to make a critical study of this party, even though it is no longer there.

While regionalism, in general, is essentially a product of India's diversity, sub regionalism, in particular, is the result of historical and geographical factors in it. The term 'Sub-region' refers to a smaller area within a region or 'Nation' which for economic, geographic, historical and social reasons, is aware of possessing a distinct identity.[1] Sub-regional conflicts have often been found to take the shape of movements claiming their separate identity either in the formation of separate states or in the formation of regional political parties on the basis of the localised support of the depressed region. In this context sub-regionalism, championed in Orissa by Ganatantra Parishad, has to be understood.

The geography and history have divided Orissa into several parts. In particular, the people of western Orissa strongly feel that they have a distinct culture, as separate from Oriya culture, which, in their eyes, is the culture of the coastal people. Further, they also believe that due to the mischief and partiality of coastal politicians and officers, they have become poor and backward. This has resulted in their resentment, anger and bitterness against the coastal Orissa. This feeling has at times taken very ugly turn

when the chiefs of Western Orissa have tried to exploit it to their advantage.[2] One of the benificiaries of this process was the Ganatantra Parishad.

Birth of Ganatantra Parishad

The immediate post-merger situation in the princely areas of the western region was in a state of political anomie.[3] Sudden transformation of these areas from the feudal grip to the democratic set up created a jolt in the old administrative machinery of these areas. It was accompanied by the adjustment problem, as the new units had to establish new relationships with one another. There was considerable tension as men found themselves in new administrative posts and the internal bureaucratic rules of the provincial administration were imposed upon these merged areas. Since the laws of the princely states often differed not only with the British Orissa but also with one another, there was considerable strain when uniformity was imposed. Both the structures of authority and the level of participation were new to the people and their elites. This is how there developed enough discontent and distrust. Consequently, the general administration ran into many difficulties. The administrators, who were sent by the Government of Orissa descended in the ex-state areas like an "army of occupation" and each of them seemed to feel that he was a little "Maharaja".[4] So instead of creating an image of "rescuers" and "saviours", they were perceived as "conquerors" and "imposters". For comparatively simple people of these areas the administrator was identified with the Congress Party and thus for them the Congress assumed the image of an unwanted tyrant. The people, who were uneducated and unsophisticated and were cut off from the rest of the world for a long time, had no appreciation for the substitution of the princely rule by democratic forces.[5] They began to think of themselves as a conquered people, ruled by the Congress—they lost their Rajas and thus they lost their independence. The "katkis" who were their erstwhile "exploiters" now became their "Conquerors" in the garb of the Congress party.[6]

The people of western Orissa became restive under such circumstances. They were aggrieved for several other reasons

also. The Congress rule caused many inconveniences for the people of western Orissa. In addition to the bureaucratic harassment to which they were subjected, they were also faced with some economic difficulties. The tribals of the region, in particular, greatly suffered. The ex-states, in many respects, were closed economies and shielded from the market prices prevailing in other parts of Orissa. After these areas came under the Congress rule, the price of rice increased fourfold almost overnight and new taxes were imposed on the people. The tribals were deprived of their traditional right to make use of forest products for earning their livelihood. These inconveniences and deprivations resulted in accentuating the resentment of these people against the coastal Orissa and the Congress party, which was perceived by them as championing its interests. The anti-Hirakud agitation in Sambalpur and sporadic adivasi (Tribal) risings in some princely areas which occurred on the eve of the merger were the significant developments at this time and they further intensified the existing hostility between the people of western Orissa and those of the coastal districts. The construction of the Hirakud Dam in Sambalpur district to primarily control the flood water of the river Mahanadi in Cuttack district became a serious issue between the people of western Orissa and the government of Orissa. The construction of the dam involved the immersion of large tracts of land. The acquisition of lands generated bitter resentment in peasants even though they were paid compensation on liberal terms. The loss of land immediately was apparently a "psychological disaster" for them, howsoever attractive the amount of compensation and the future benefits might be. The bureacratic delay and intricacies in the payment of their compensation added salt to their injury. The issue of the Hirakud dam seemed to provide a golden opportunity to the ex-rulers of Orissa to reassert themselves in the power game. The Adivasi risings which mostly occurred in the ex-princely areas having dense tribal population were put down by the Government of Orissa with the help of armed forces. This created a severe wound among the Adivasis and the terrorisation techniques in suppressing the suspects and leaders created further fissures in the political interaction between the hill area people and the coastal leaders. The feelings of suspicion and antipathy

were long-established between the hill and the coastal areas. Anti-Katki feeling ran strong in Western Orissa. Such a feeling, however, was not only entertained by the ex-rulers, who had their own grievances and reasons for being dislodged but also was nourished by the small middle class and the common people of the hill areas "who looked with alarm on the new incursion of 'Katkis'.[7]

Thus the merger only widened the gulf between the two regions, the hill and the coast. The Congress government hardly made any attempt to bridge this gap. One can clearly perceive that Orissa politics would have taken a different shape had some important princes from the merged areas been included in the cabinet in the best interests of Orissa.[8] The piecemeal efforts of the Congress to enlist the support of a few small and insignificant ex-rulers from the adjoining areas of the coastal districts by making them cabinet ministers went in vain.[9] On the other hand all the grievances of the people of the merged areas had their comulative effect and sharpened the existing regional cleavage. There soon developed a strong feeling among the people of the hill region that nothing tangible had been done to set it right. The events of 1948 and 1949 brought the rulers and the common people of Western Orissa closer than ever before and they developed common grievances against the Congress government. Soon they decided to frame a common platform for the proper articulation of their grievances. At this time when the people of Western Orissa felt helpless and leaderless the Rajas came back and filled up the vacuum, a role the Rajas seldom expected they would be able to play again.[10] The rulers were natural leaders and they still held powerful hold over their subjects. They had the advantages of traditional feudalism and enjoyed the reverence usual in a feudal society. The transfer of power left the rulers entrenched in the hearts of the common man of the merged areas.[11] These ex-rulers were joined by self-seekers whose ambition could not be fulfilled with the assumption of power after the merger by the Congress. These men along with the prajamandal dissidents and anti-merger agitators came forward with a plan to have a party of their own. The situation in the Western Orissa in the post-merger period rather genially helped to give this idea a concrete form. Ultimately a new party was born in October

1948 under the leadership of R. N. Sigh Deo, Maharaja of Bolangir-Patna and P. K. Deo, Maharaja of Kalahandi. The first meeting of the party was held in the House of Patna Maharaja at Balibandha of Sambalpur. The party, at the initial stage, was known as the Koshala Utkala Praja Parishad with headquarter at Sambalpur. The Praja Parishad became the Ganatantra Parishad just after two years in October 1950. In view of the first general elections of 1952, the Praja Parishad was reorganised and enlarged to a state level party which was to cover the whole of Orissa including the coastal areas, the traditional home of the Congress.

Thus a regional party called the Ganatantra Parishad was born out of the political and historical necessity to fill up a vacuum created in the western region of Orissa following the merger of the princely states. The old "Garjat" regions and its adjacent areas of Orissa formed a society by itself. It was hitherto a conglomeration of the self-contained units. Each unit was simple and directly ruled by "Rajas". When the Congress entered into this area with the super-imposition of a powerful bureaucracy, it simply reacted and was not prepared to accept the rule and the leadership of the Congress. The Ganatantra Parishad wasthe product of these reactions.

Ideology and Programme of the Ganatantra Parishad

So far as its ideology was concerned, the Ganatantra Parishad was not a feudal party although it was widely perceived as a feudal party. Further, it was acclaimed as a "Centrist" party. It rejected the extremism of both Right and Left. Erdman says that the G. P. was the best example of "Tory Democracy" to have grown in India.[12] The G. P. promised 'democracy' and 'clean administration'. It gave a call to fight against the alleged 'dictatorship' of the Congress. Further, it sought to redress the economic imbalance between coastal Orissa and Western Orissa.

Ganatantra Parishad and 1952, 1957 and 1961 Mid-term Elections.

Politics in Orissa since independence has frequently been dominated by regional considerations and antagonisms. Electoral poli-

tics in the state provides an important and appropriate arena for examining the role of sub-regional conflicts and hostility that greatly affected the political development of the state. It would be pertinent to examine how national and regional political themes and trends interacted in the state politics. On the other hand, it is rather an admitted fact that regional antagonisms have been largely instrumental in the creation of new elites, politicization of new groups and stimulation of wide-spread political participation.[13] The rise of a strong regional party in the state after independence greatly contributed towards transforming the state pattern of Congress's one-party dominance and changing patterns of political mobilization by increasing political participation of hitherto unorganised and inert masses of a greater part of the state.[14] This changing electoral pattern in the post-independence period led to the emergence of an almost two-party competition in the election politics of the state between 1952 and 1962.

The Ganatantra Parishad which emerged as one of the major political parties in Orissa in the post-independence period had no existence before independence. But between 1948 and 1952 the Ganatantra Parishad established itself as a political force in the state politics. From the very inception the party diametrically opposed the Congress party in one way or the other. It had no previous electoral experience and also had no mass following like the Congress. In respect of political mobilization, the G. P. was far behind its opponent in the electoral field. Unlike the Congress and other national parties competing for power in the state, the Ganatantra Parishad was purely a state party having its headquarter in Bolangir (Orissa), belonging to Western Orissa and far away from the state capital. In spite of all these shortcomings, the G. P. assumed the role of a principal opponent of the Congress Party in the state in the first general elections held in 1952 although it was born only in 1950. The political scene in Orissa changed radically since the first general elections of 1952 with the emergence of the G. P. in the electoral field. The party, which originated to promote the special interests of the people of the western hill region, had fairly solid following in certain districts located in this area. These districts formed the ex-princely areas most of which were inhabited by a large number of tribals. These areas subsequently became the electoral forts of the G. P.

Because of the presence of the two towering ex-princely leaders—R. N. Singh Deo and P. K. Deo—who were popular among the people, commanding feudal loyalty from the common mass, the feudal-conservative elements of these merged areas were consolidated and brought under the Parishad's fold against the Congress. Neither the Congress which had deep roots in pre-independence political movements in Orissa nor the Socialists and the Communists had any organisation worth the name in these merged areas. The Parishad, therefore, with a free hand in this part of Orissa without much opposition from any party entered the first general elections with a lot of confidence. But it is important to note here that the Parishad had also to face several disadvantages in the electoral field against its adversaries. Besides the Congress, there were other all-India parties like the Socialists and the Communists, and a large number of independents in the field. As a party in power the Congress was undoubtedly in an advantageous position with control over the administrative machines. The propaganda by the Congress, that it had the rich experience of government, it enjoyed the support of the Central Government and it was better placed to bring about the economic development of the state with the help of the centre, sufficiently weighed in its favour. Most important of all the disadvantages of the Gantantra Parishad was the fear and respect of the people for the 'Raj' that the British left behind in India.[15] Besides, the Parishad was castigated as a "feudal party" and a few of its ex-princely leaders were threatened with the forfeiture of their privy purses because of their participation in politics.[16] Further, British Orissa had already experienced two elections before independence. In these elections held in 1936 and 1946 the people of only six British administered districts could participate. The greater part of Orissa consisting of 24 princely states were not able to take part in these elections as the merger of these states by then had not been effected. It was in 1952 that the Ganatantra Parishad and the people of the western Orissa had got the first chance to participate in the elections.

The rise of Ganatantra Parishad as a powerful regional political party after independence brought about a significant change in the electoral politics of the state. It participated in the first two general elections of 1952 and 1957 and in the mid-term elections

of 1961. In 1962 the Parishad merged with the Swatantra Party of India. During its short life time of twelve years from 1950 to 1962, it emerged as a powerful political force in the politics of the state.

The Parishad entered into an electoral alliance with the Kisan Majdoor Praja Party and the Independent People's Party before the first general elections of 1952. This pre-electoral alliance was made possible because of their common hostility to the Congress. The Independent People's Party led by two veteran ex-Congress leaders of the state, Pandit Nilakantha Das and Pandit Godabaris Mishra, was founded on the eve of the election. These two stalwarts, who had been expelled from the Congress before independence, made a common ground of their grievances against it with the Ganatantra Parishad. Further the alliance of the Forward Block with the Independent People's Party had some impact on the Ganatantra Parishad. The leader of the Forward Block, Dibakar Patnaik, was a life long supporter of Nilakantha Das, the leader of the Independent People's Party. Thus the attempt to build an electoral alliance against the Congress was, no doubt, materialised; but this electoral alliance had little impact on the election results, because all the constituents of the alliance except the Ganatantra Parishad had little support-base.

In the first general election of 1952, the Parishad secured 31 out of 58 contested seats in a House of 140. It polled 20.4% of the valid votes cast in the state as against Congress's 39%. It was a spectacular achievement indeed for the Ganatantra Parishad which was only three years old. The Congress lost majority; it secured only 67 seats, although it had set 135 candidates. The performance of the Congress was undoubtedly poor compared to its previous performance. With 31 seats in a House of 140 the Ganatantra Parishad emerged as the second largest party and assumed the role of the principal opposition in the state legislature. This success of the party was partly due to the personal influence of the two former rulers of Bolangir and Kalahandi and partly due to the unpopularity of the Congress in the merged areas of the western Orissa. An analysis of the electoral performance of the Ganatantra Parishad shows that the partly captured 29 out of 50 seats allotted to the districts of Koraput, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Sundargarh and Keonjhar. The party bagged

all the 9 seats allotted to the district of Bolangir which was the headquarter of the Ganatantra Parishad. Interestingly the Congress not only returned blank in this district but in the process a sitting Congress minister was defeated by the Parishad and he even lost his security deposit. The party had similar success in the district of Kalahandi which was its other stronghold. It captured 4 seats out of 5 contested in this district. The party was also greatly successful in the two districts of Sambalpur and Koraput where it secured 5 and 7 seats as against 6 and 4 seats respectively secured by the Congress. A notable achievement of the Ganatantra Parishad was its success in capturing a seat in Cuttack district which was the bastion of the Congress in coastal Orissa. However, this was the only seat which the party could win in the whole of the coastal region. It is thus apparent that the influence of the Ganatantra Parishad was mainly confined to the former princely areas of the western Orissa and a few areas outside it with strong feudal roots. The two main parties, the Congress and the Parishad largely came to represent the two main regions with different subcultures and historical developments.

In the elections to the Lok Sabha in the first general elections there were 58 candidates in total from all the parties for 20 seats allotted to the state. The Ganatantra Parishad fielded 12 candidates as against 18 candidates of the Congress. Like Assembly elections, in the Lok Sabha elections also the Parishad fielded candidates only in the western region and the Koraput district whereas the Congress gave candidates in almost all constituencies. The Parishad won 5 seats as against 11 of the Congress, and the rest were divided between the independents, Socialists and the Communists.

By the time the second general elections of 1957 was held the Ganatantra Parishad had grown very powerful. Not only did it consolidate its position in western Orissa, its original fort, but also it made some inroads into the coastal Orissa. The rank and file of the party, being inspired by the results of 1952 election, toiled hard to make it stronger. On the other hand, mainly owing to factionalism, the Congress had become weaker. Even after staying in power for a decade, it could hardly penetrate into western Orissa. The weekness of the party was very apparent. The

Ganatantra Parishad nominated 108 candidates in 1957 elections as against 58 in 1952. The number of candidates fielded by the party shows that the Parishad extensively widened its electoral base in 1957 elections and took a determined bid to defeat the Congress at the poll. The Congress, on the other hand, entered candidates for all 140 seats as against 135 in 1952. In 1957 general election neither the Communists nor the PSP put up candidates against the Parishad aspirants in Parishad strongholds. There the Ganatantra Parishad was opposed by the Congress, Jharkhand or independent candidates. In the elections to the Lok Sabha there were 57 candidates in total for 20 seats. The Ganatantra Parishad fielded 14 candidates as against 20 of the Congress. The PSP and the Communists fielded 6 and 5 candidates each respectively.

The second general elections of 1957 proved very good for the Ganatantra Parishad. The party increased its poll to 28.68% and improved its representation from 31 to 51 in the Assembly. In this election the Parishad not only bettered its previous performance in its traditional strongholds in the hill districts but also grabbed one seat each from the two coastal districts of Cuttack and Puri. The Congress received a great setback in this election with the smallest number of seats ever secured by it. It secured only 56, that was only 5 more than the seats secured by the Ganatantra Parishad. Thus the steady decline in the electoral performance of the Congress and the sharp rise of the Parishad brought the two parties almost to a level of equality. The position of the Congress became precarious as the PSP and the Communists increased their strength with 11 and 9 seats respectively at the cost of the Congress. In 1957 the Parishad increased its representation to the Lok Sabha from 5 to 7. Its representation was equal with that of the Congress which also secured 7 seats. Among others the PSP won 2, Communist 1, and independents 3. Thus both in Assembly and Lok Sabha elections, the Parishad fared extremely well whereas there was a marked decline in the performance of the Congress, the dominant party.

The Ganatantra Parishad contested for 34 seats out of total 66 seats of the coastal districts of Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, and Ganjam as against its 9 candidates in 1952. But the party was successful only in two constituencies. Out of total 74 seats of the hill district

of the western region including Koraput and Mayurbhanj, the Parishad contested for 72 seats and won as many as 49 seats as against 13 gained by the Congress. The Parishad reported its previous performance in the district of Bolangir where the Congress party was totally eclipsed losing all the 9 seats to the Parishad. In Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Phulbani the Congress had similar fate by drawing blank while in Dhenkanal and Kalahandi, it had to be content with only one seat each. It was the Parishad which captured all these seats won by the Congress in the previous elections. The over all district-wise analysis of the electoral performance of the two main parties shows that they remained more or less confined to thier respective regions. 'The sub-regional conflict thus continued to be well reflected in the ecletoral behaviour of the two regions. Thus the ultimate result was the continuing political instability in the state. Fresh alignments after the elections started taking shape and the game of defection became an important aspect of states politics as none of the parties could secure absolute majority in the Assembly. The G. P. and the PSP arrived at a joint agreed programme.[17] The two parties sought to form a coalition goverment. Some independent members extended their support to this idea. Even the Communists pledged their support in the initial stage but later withdrew from it. However, this effort finally failed. A Congress ministry again under the leadership of H. K. Mahtab, was formed with the support of 5 Jharkhand members and the acquiescence of 9 Communist members.[18]

Congress-Ganatantra Parishad Coalition Government

The Congress ministry which came to power after 1957 had to pass through a series of crises. The game of defection and horse-trading that continued thereafter in the politics of the state made things worse and resulted in accentuating political instability in the state. The Congress did not even hesitate to take recourse to ugly means for remaining in power.[19] During the time of the formation of the Congress ministry, the party made some efforts to persaude some opposition members to join the Congress. Consequent upon such efforts 8 MLAs of the Parishad, 6 independent members and one Communist member crossed the floor and joined the

Congress Legislature party.[20] This enabled the Congress to have temporary breathing space to run the administration. But soon the Congress was in for trouble. In April 1958 the 4 Parishad members out of 8 who had crossed the floor earlier returned to their parent fold and took seats with the opposition benches. Subsequently also a small group of Congress MLAs including a Deputy Minister crossed the floor and resigned from the Congress.[21] This reduced the strength of the Congress in the legislature to a minority. This political drama ultimately subsided when the Deputy Minister who had crossed the floor staged a come-back along with three others in May 1958.[22] Disgusted with this sort of horse-trading the Congress High Command directed the Chief Minister to tender resignation and Mahtab resinged on 9th May 1958. Under such circumstances the Ganatantra Parishad quickly offered its willingness to form a ministry with the support of the PSP and other MLAs. But the Governor did not invite its leader for the purpose and after much political speculation for about a fortnight Mahtab was asked by the Governor to withdraw his resignation. Mahtab withdrew his resignation on 28th May 1958 and the ministry thereafter continued in a dwindling position. On several occasions even its existence became uncertain. The political situation of the state became very uncertain. Meanwhile Mahtab who had mooted for sometime the idea of having a coalition, invited the Parishad to join hands with the Congress for a stable administration in the state. The Parishad leaders, after the failure of the joint efforts to form a non-Congress government, realized that under the circumstances of uncertain behaviour of opposition parties in the legislature it was not feasible to form a strong and stable non-Congress ministry in the state. They therefore, responded very favourably to the call of Mahtab to end the prevailing instability in the state and enter into a coalition with the Congress.[23] Thus a coalition government of the Congress and the Parishad came to power in May 1959. This shows that the Congress, in order to continue in power, was forced to seek the help of the Ganatantra Parishad, its traditional rival and the Parishad which gradually emerged as the strongest force in the western region, ultimately brought about the downfall of the sole Congress rule in the state in 1959.

The Congress-Parishad coalition did not last long. It became

a victim of the growing factionalism inside the Congress. The Biju group succeeded in breaking it on 25th February 1961. Mid-term elections to the Assembly were held in June 1961.

The Ganatantra Parishad had tasted power as a partner of the coalition ministry which ruled the state from May 1959 to February 1961. This taste of power seemed to have made the party a little complacent. The internal conflict in the organisational level had eaten away its strength of unity which it previously exhibited Soon after the dissolution of the coalition some sections of the Parishad had developed the idea of having electoral alliance with the Swatantra Party. This created further crisis in the party which seemed to significantly influence its performance in the mid-term elections.[24] The Parishad, therefore, with a waning influence, had to face the reorganised Congress which appeared stronger than ever before under the dynamic leadership of Biju Pattanaik in 1961.[25]

The results of the 1961 election proved disappointing for the Parishad. Having fielded as many as 117 candidates, it was able to grab only 22 seats—16 less than the number of seats it had won in 1957. On the other hand, the Congress under Biju's leadership, won a big tally of 82 seats.

The expectations of the leaders of the Ganatantra Parishad did not come true. Its sharing of power with the Congress, which was considered by its leaders to be of great help to the party, proved to be a great failure. They had hoped before joining the coalition that from this vantage point the Parishad could do more to stabilize its position in the highlands and perhaps to extend its influence to the coastal regions.[26] But contrary to their expectations, the coalition experience proved to boomerang on them. Organisationally the Parishad was a strong and stable party upto 1957 so long as it played the role of opposition.[27] The conflicts in its organisation developed after 1957 on the issue of the party's alliance with the PSP. It was alleged that the Parishad was divided into two groups—one Mohanty group and the other Patna Maharaja-Mishra group.[28] It was said to be a division of the party into the feudal group and the progressive group. This factionalism was soon manifested in the election for the presidentship of the party organisation when there was stiff contest between Madhusudan Mohanty and Raj Ballav Mishra.[29] The

post of president fell vacant after Sradhakar Supakar resigned. It was alleged that Supakar and Patna Maharaja had developed difference of opinion on certain ideological issues that led to the resignation of the former.[30] In the election for presidentship. Raj Ballav Mishra defeated Madhusudan Mohanty. Mohanty's defeat was apparently due to deliberate non-voting by some members of the Patna Maharaja group in the election. Even Mohanty's candidature for the Rajya Sabha seat was rejected. The Parishad Parliament Board nominated Harihar Patel as its candidate for the Rajya Sabha seat. Mohanty thereafter resigned from the Ganatantra Parishad. This confirmed the group rivalry inside the organisation of the Parishad. The issue of coalition with the Congress only intensified this factional conflict in the party.

Table – 1. Elections to the Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1952, 1957 & 1961 Mid–term elections.

Name of the Party	No. of seats secured in		
	1952	1957	1961
Congress	67	56	82
Ganatantra Parishad	31	51	36
Socialist	10	—	—
CPI	7	9	4
PSP	—	11	10
SSP	—	—	—
Jharkhand	—	5	—
FB	1	—	—
Independents	24	8	8

In the Lok Sabha election of 1962, the Ganatantra Parishad, because of its bitter experience in mid-term election, decided to field candidates only in those areas where it wielded influence. The party put up fewer nominees this time than earlier. It contested 11 seats as against 18 in 1957 and won 4 Lok Sabha seats in 1962 as against 7 in 1957.[31] One of its important leaders, Raj Ballav Mishra, was defeated by a Congress candidate in Keonjhar. The defeat of Mishra was a major setback for the party. One of its stalwarts, Surendra Mohanty, resigned from the party before the election and contested for Lok Sabha on the Congress ticket. The super-session of the Cuttack branch of the Parishad after Surendra Mohanty's resignation created another wedge in the party unity.[32]

Table—2. Region-wise break-up of the candidates won with Ganatantra Parishad and Congress tickets in 1952, 1957 & 1961 Assembly elections.

Sl. No.	Coastal Region	1952 Candidates fielded/ Seats Won		1957 Candidates fielded/ Seats won		1961 Candidates Fielded/ Seats won	
		Congress	G.P.	Congress	G.P.	Congress	G.P.
1.	Cuttack	26/18	2/1	24/15	10/1	24/18	17/0
2.	Puri	14/8	—	15/8	6/1	15/10	14/2
3.	Balasore	12/11	7/0	11/8	5/0	11/6	9/1
4,	Ganjam	14/4	—	16/11	13/0	16/14	12/0
	Total—	66/41	9/1	66/42	34/2	66/48	52/3
	Hill Region						
5.	Koraput	10/4	10/7	12/7	12/5	12/10	12/2
6.	Phulbani	5/1	—	4/0	4/4	4/2	4/2
7.	Dhenkanal	6/6	2/0	8/1	6/5	8/4	8/4
8.	Kalahandi	7/3	5/4	8/1	8/6	7/1	6/6
9.	Bolangir	9/0	9/9	9/0	9/9	9/0	9/8
10.	Sambalpur	13/6	12/5	12/2	12/9	13/7	7/3
11.	Keonjhar	4/0	4/2	6/0	6/5	6/2	6/4
12.	Sundargarh	5/3	4/2	5/0	5/3	5/1	5/4
13.	Mayurbhanj	10/4	3/1	10/2	9/3	10/7	8/0
Total	=	69/27	49/30	74/13	72/49	74/34	65/33
Grand Total	=	135/68	58/31	130/56	106/51	140/82	117/36

After the 1962 election the Ganatantra Parishad merged in the Swatantra Party. In fact the merger talks with Swatantra Party had started as early as 1959. The talk of the proposed merger was only postponed for the time being as the Parishad at that time was a partner of the coalition ministry in the state. Until 1961 there was an obvious and understandable reason for delaying the merger talks. But the abrupt fall of the coalition ministry drastically changed the situation. Soon after the dissolution of the coalition the merger talks gained urgency. The poor results of the mid-term election only forced the Parishad to ultimately decide in mid-November 1961 to merge with the Swatantra.[33] But the actual merger did not take place, however, until after the 1962 general

elections. It was owing to a technical hitch arising from a decision of the Election Commission in connection with the symbol to be used by the Swatantra candidates in Orissa, that both the parties were reluctantly compelled to postpone the actual merger till the general election had concluded. Soon after the general elections of 1962 the actual mergers of the Ganatantra Parishad with the Swatantra took place. The merger became effective from 3rd March 1962 when all the members of the Parishad automatically became members of the Orissa unit of the Swatantra party.[34] Thus the Parishad lost its identity as a regional party in the state which had been active in the state politics playing the role of a powerful opposition for about a decade since 1952.

Performance of Ganatantra Parishad

Out of 12 years, for 10 years the Parishad occupied the opposition bench and only for 21 months it became a partner of a coalition government. While in opposition, it mostly sought to help the people of western Orissa. It ventilated the grievances of the people who were displaced as a result of the construction of the Hirakud Dam and the establishment of the Rourkela Steel Plant. It severely indicted the Congress government of Orissa for its alleged callousness towards the Oriya-speaking people suffering in Sareikala and Kharasuan which were awarded to Bihar by New Delhi. When in power it took some significant steps in regard to land reforms, cooperative farming and new food-grains policy.[35]

Leadership Pattern

The G.P. owed its birth to some prominent ex-rulers of western Orissa. In a short time they made it popular and strong by fully utilising their old control and sway over the local people who were bound to them by multiple bondages. Till its final day, the hold of R. N. Singh Deo and K. P. Deo over the party hardly slackened. However, in course of time, they encouraged some middle-class elements not only to enter the party, but also to occupy some leadership positions within the party. Several times even the party presidentship went to some of these people. The leaders

of the party generally belonged to the western Orissa and this was not a surprise as the party derived its strength almost exclusively from that part of the state.

Conclusion

The Ganatantra Parishad had a short span of life. But its life was full of actions and vitality. It profoundly influenced the state politics. Though a regional party with the ill-reputation of being the "Party of Maharajas", it was able to win mass support in western Orissa and emerged as the second strongest party in Orissa. Throughout its life period of 12 years, it was largely successful in maintaining its support base in western Orissa and did not allow Congress to make a dent into it.

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18. A few independent members also extended support to the ministry.
19. It was alleged that the Jharkhand members were heavily paid from the state fund and at times its leader, Jaipal Singh, M.P., was to fly in haste to Bhubaneswar to save the ministry from defeat.
20. See B. B. Jena, N. 8, P. 490.
21. The four Congress MLAs including the Deputy Minister, Anup Singh Deo, crossed the floor and resigned from the Congress which reduced the strength of the party to 67 including the Speaker. The Opposition at this time had 69 members.
22. B. B. Jena, N. 8, P. 490.
23. On 30 March 1959.
24. B. B. Jena, N. 8, P. 499.
25. Since Biju Patnaik became the President of the Pradesh Congress Committee, the Congress organisation in the state had undergone a powerful organisational thrust under the leadership of dynamic Patnaik.
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27. B. B. Jena, N. 8, P. 498.
28. *The Matrubhumi*, 5 March 1958.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *The Matrubhumi*, 30 September 1958.
31. The party did not contest any seat from Cuttack, Puri and Balasore districts. It also withdrew its candidate from Angul constituency where H. K. Mahtab was a candidate.
32. B. B. Jena, N. 8, P. 499.

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17

RISE AND FALL OF REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES A STUDY OF JANA CONGRESS IN ORISSA

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In the face of the dazzling glow of the role of the Congress during the freedom struggle which remained undimmed throughout the Nehru period, no other party, nay, any regional party—could shine during those years. Jawaharlal Nehru, the gigantic leader dominated Indian politics to such an extent that all others were completely eclipsed. All the competing groups within the Congress were then restrained and the party remained one and strong under his dynamic leadership. But with his exit did appear cracks in the Congress organization and opposition forces began to gather some clout. As a result of the weakening of the central control due to intense factionalism, peripheral forces tended to assert themselves. Against this unfolding background there blew a strong anti-Congress wind in 1967 paving the way for the rise of regional parties in several states. But with the passage of time except the D.M.K. and its splinter party AIDMK in Tamilnadu and the Akali Dal in the Punjab, all these regional parties, one after another, became extinct and the phenomenon of regional parties seemed to be a receding wave in Indian politics. But the astounding victory of the Telugu Desam in Andhra and the great success of the Kranti Ranga in Karnataka has put a stop to such thinking and raised new hopes for regional parties in the country. These new developments have forced the students of Indian politics to cast a second look at the regional parties which are no longer there but whose study would help them in better assessing the problems and prospects of existing regional parties and the future of regional politics in India. This would explain why the Jana Congress which emerged as a state party in Orissa in 1966 and remained a strong force in the state till 1970 was selected for study.

This paper has dealt with the origin, growth, organisational

structure and the ideology of the Jana Congress. Its role in election politics and performance both as a ruling and opposition party in the state politics has been analysed. The inferences drawn provide an analytical approach to the study of regional parties in India.

The Congress dominance has almost been a constant variable in state politics of the Indian Union. The situation is of course different in some states, where the Congress is weak or has a marginal majority. Opposition parties in these states find their existence meaningful. They enjoy a challenging position and look forward to overthrowing the Congress hegemony. Orissa in this regard is an interesting case. Orissa's political instability is a negative reflection of "One party dominant system"[1], which functioned at the national level and most of the states in the fifties and early sixties. The Congress did not enjoy that monopoly in Orissa. Orissa did not experience the rule of one party dominant system after independence. However, the Congress used to enjoy a lot of influence in the state politics which was challenged by the opposition in their bid to capture power. The Congress in Orissa failed to secure absolute majority in the Assembly in all the elections except the 1961 mid-term election and the 1980 and 1985 Assembly elections. On the other hand, the existence of powerful and effective opposition parties has become a real threat to the Congress in Orissa. At the same time factionalism inside the party, a continuous feature of Orissa politics, has forced one faction or other to quit the party and oppose it from outside. This trend started with the emergence of the Jana Congress as a strong party in 1967.

Origin

Ever since the freedom struggle the Congress party in Orissa has suffered from intra-party rivalry and factional conflicts. But the Congress in the pre-independence elections of 1936 and 1946, secured majority in spite of intra-party conflicts. Politics in Orissa entered a new phase with the merger of princely states with it in 1948-49. This brought a change in the political scene of the state. The Congress had practically little following in the merged areas. Because of this extremely weak position of the

Congress in the merged areas, the overall position of the party in the state became weak. Thus, Orissa Congress after 1949 became quantitatively larger but quantitatively poorer.[2]

In the general elections of 1951 and 1957 the Congress party failed to secure absolute majority in the Orissa Assembly but with intense politicking and horsetrading it could manage to form governments and this process with much difficulty continued till 1959. Ultimately the Congress was compelled to form a coalition government with the Ganatantra Parisad on 22nd May 1959, their main rival in state politics, after the proposal was cleared by the AICC Working Committee on 12th May 1959,[3] where Morarji Desai moved the resolution. Biju Patnaik supported by Biren Mitra was the main architect of that coalition.

But soon after the coalition was formed, Biju and Biren fell out with Dr. H. K. Mahatab, the Chief Minister, as they failed to get ministerial berths and as Mahatab did not accept some of Biju's ideas. Biju and his friends started attacking the coalition experiment and urged Mahatab to break it. But Mahatab, sensing that Biju was a threat to his leadership within the Congress, did not succumb to his pressure. But then the tide turned against him. The forthcoming months witnessed a trial of strength between him and Biju. On 13th February 1961[4] Biju became the President of the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee defeating Banamali Patnaik, the incumbent and a close follower of Mahatab. After this Biju demanded the resignation of the coalition ministry.[5] Mahatab being helpless had to resign on 24th February 1961,[6] and the state came under the Presidents's rule on 25th February 1961[7] for the first time.

A mid-term election to the Orissa Assembly was held in June 1961, and the Congress Party under Biju's leadership won 82 seats and Mahatab due to his opposition to Biju remained aloof from election politics, though it was alleged that he set up independent candidates against official Congress candidates in the election.[8] However he became a member of the Lok Sabha in 1962 from the Angul Lok Sabha constituency and tried to discredit Biju's regime from Delhi. After the 1961 mid-term election Biju became the Chief Minister of Orissa. But his term was cut-short as he resigned on 1st October 1963 under the Kamaraj plan. Biren Mitra, with his blessing, succeeded him on 2nd October 1963.

Biju Patnaik's dynamism and penchant for rapid industrialisation as also his promises along with the feasibility of their implementation did not carry much sense and the political opponents whom he had silenced in 1961 gathered strength and courage to revolt against his leadership. Mahatab's faction joined the opposition in exposing the corruption of Biju and Biren.

Ultimately Biren resigned from the Chief Minister's post on 21 February 1965[9] and Sadasiva Tripathy became the Chief Minister defeating Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, a Mahatab man, in the race. The Congress organisation continued to remain under Biju's control. The dissident group led by Mahatab lobbied heavily before the Congress High Command to vindicate their stand and tarnish the image of Biju and Biren but to no avail,

With this failure Mahatab concentrated on organising a party of his own in Orissa but did not make it public lest he should draw the wrath of Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister, with whom he had considerable affinity.[10] He also, at the same time, tried to assess his own position in the state politics and public mind.

Slowly, the Mahatab faction started mobilising public opinion by organising the district conferences under the guise of "Bandhu Milan" (social get together). A state level committee was formed to streamline their functioning.[12] Finally, they made all-out preparation to form a parallel Congress in Orissa.[13] A state level convention to this effect was held at Bhubaneswar from 26 to 28 November 1965. The state-level convention. which was attended by more than one thousand delegates from all over the state, proved to be a success from their own point of view.[14]

The dissidents severed all the ties with the Congress and strongly urged that the Congress under the then "corrupt" leaders could not attain its aim and fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people of Orissa. The only source left for them was to dissociate themselves from these unworthy people.

The parallel Congress decided to form a separate organisation of their own.[15] A meeting of the state level committee was convened at the residence of Pabitra Mohan Pradhan in Bhubaneswar on 28 and 29 April 1966.[16] Mahatab, the spokesman of the dissidents, discussed the political situation of the country. He specially referred to the organisation and activities of the dissident

groups in the states like Kerala and West Bengal and suggested that the proposed party should be named on the pattern of the names of rebel Congress parties of other states. After some days the Bengal Congress took its birth in West Bengal. Soon after this the Congrese dissidents named their new party as Jana Congress. The Jana Congress, a product of the factional conflict within the Congress party of Orissa, came into existance on 5 May 1966 with 11 MLAs and one MP. It was argued[17] that, the two incongruous groups could not live together, and a break with the parent organization would be good for both of them. Just before the 4th general election of 1967, Jana Congress breathed its virility of youthfulness.

Thus the clash of the egos of two personalities (Biju and Mahatab) to be the torch bearer of Orissa finally paved the way for perpetual alienation waiting for the public mandate to uphold their political hope in the 4th general election.

Leadership

The Jana Congress, in a sense, was a regional party; in another sense it was not. It was confined to Orissa, and it stood for the interests of the state. Hence it was a regional party. But its growth was not motivated by any regional grievance within Orissa, the way the Ganatantra Parishad was, which was brought into existence in order to promote the interests of western Orissa which remained neglected for a long time. On the other hand, the Jana Congress was mostly confined to the coastal Orissa, the developed part of the state. Therefore the leadership of Jana Congress did not spring from any regional milieu. On the other hand it was similar to all-India parties in respect of the leadership base.

The birth of Jana Congress did not lead to the emergence of new leadership. Its leaders were experienced and seasoned leaders of the Congress from which they defected. Almost all of them belonged to the coastal Orissa and had the same social, economic and political background as most of the Congress leaders had. They, in general, came of the upper stratum of the society, were well educated and took active and leading parts in the freedom struggle. Only one of them—Pabitra Mohan

Pradhan—belonged to Dhenkanal district and was well known for his role in the Praja Mandal movement. It is important to note that not a single new face occupied any important position in Jana Congress and the party did not include a single leader who was known for his regionalism.

All the Jana Congress leaders belonged either to the Karan or Cultivator castes with the sole exception of Santunu Kumar Das who belonged to the scheduled caste but their leadership had little to do with their caste base. These leaders proved themselves as capable organisers and formed a link between the Gandhian traditions of the pre-independence era and politics of competition and manipulation of the post-independence period. This group of political elites, wielded power in Orissa's political structure right from the independence of the country.

Ideology of The Party

Ideology was not the rallying point of the new political groups[19] which formed regional parties just before the 4th general election. This was more true of the splinter groups of the Congress which formed regional parties in different states. The birth of the Jana Congress was prompted more by personal factors than by any political and ideological conflicts with its parent party, the Congress. Thus, ideologically, both the parties were identical in their approach to the social, economic and political problems. The Jana Congress even during its embryonic stage had committed itself to the principles and ideology of the Congress.[20] Their main objective was to defeat "the corrupt ruling party at the polls." They even admitted that the Jana Congress was formed by a group of Congress people who lost faith in its official leadership.[21]

The Jana Congress declared its faith in Gandhism and gave utmost importance to the Gandhian thought and ideals and its realization in the social, economic, and political facets of human life facilitating the establishment of an ideal state.[22] It aimed at establishing a socialistic pattern of society through peaceful and democratic means The party laid emphasis on *clean administration* and removal of corruption from public life. It promised to establish a clean, efficient and popular administration in the

country. Before the 1967 general election the party entered into a programmatic alliance with the Swatantra party on the basis of a 21 point programme for forming a coalition government in Orissa[23] The 21 point programme had the grains of appeal to Oriya nationalism and linguistic chauvinism of the people at the same time the party sought to attract the attention of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people who constituted nearly 38 per cent of the total population of the state. The 21-point programme did not reflect any positive social ideology. Although the Jana Congress declared the achievement of a socialistic pattern of society as one of its aims, in joining hands with the Swatantra Party it surrendered much of its radicalism and accepted some of the conservative economic policy of the Swatantra party.

Electoral Performance

Ever since the Jana Congress was born the party prepared its election strategy to defeat the Congress in the state. The Jana Congress which included several veteran Congress leaders of the state in its fold made all possible attempts to bring about electoral understanding with other opposition parties in order to have straight contests with the Congress.

Under the leadership of Mahatab and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the party captured the Congress organisational machinery in a large number of constituencies. The party got the support of Naba Krishna Choudhry, an ex-Chief Minister and Sarvodaya leader, who promised to help it in its election campaign [25]

The political situation prevailing in the state before 1967 elections and the anti-corruption campaign of the opposition parties prepared the ground for the electoral alliance of the various opposition parties in Orissa in a number of constituencies.[26] The most important alliance was made between the Jana Congress and the Swatantra Party. The earlier collaboration between Mahatab and Singh Deo in 1959 in forming the coalition helped them in forging the alliance to fight their common enemy. The PSP did not formally join the alliance. But on seat to seat basis there were informal adjustments between the PSP and the Jana Congress because their bases of support overlapped in the eastern region[27]. Thus while the Jana Congress was strongly based in the

coastal region, the Swatantra had already an elaborate organisational net-work in the western region. The electoral alliance, therefore, was a perfect combination representing the two geographical areas of the state.[28]

The limited resources at its disposal forced the Jana Congress to set up fewer candidates. It fielded only 43 candidates. The party concentrated its resources to win Assembly seats only and, therefore, it did not contest for the Lok Sabha seats.

The Jana Congress, being a new entrant in the electoral field, made its brilliant debut with 26 seats in its bag. The Swatantra captured 49 seats. The Congress was virtually routed; it secured only 31 seats. (see Table : 1).

Table-1. 1967 Elections to the Orissa Legislative Assembly.

Sl. No.	Name of the parties	No. of Candidates contested	No. of seats secured	Valid votes in %
1.	Congress	140	31	30.62
2.	Swatantra	101	49	22.58
3.	Jana Congress	47	26	13.47
4.	C. P. I.	31	7	6.26
5.	SSP	9	2	1.52
6.	CPI (M)	10	1	1.22
7.	PSP	33	21	11.20
8.	BJS	19	—	0.54
9.	Jharkhand	10	—	
10.	SUCI	2	—	12.59
11.	Independents	201	3	

The Jana Congress leader inflicted many crushing defeats on the Congress. Its leaders, H. K. Mahatab and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, were not only elected from the two constituencies each simultaneously but in the process defeated important Congress leaders. The party was mainly benifited by the anti-Congress votes in the coastal districts. It also secured a few seats in the hill districts and princely areas of Dhenkanal owing to the personal popularity of Pabitra Mohan Pradhan.

Thus in the 1967 Assembly election, the Jana Congress was able to make an impressive debut in the electoral politics of the state. The organizational abilities of its leaders, its alliance with Swatantra and electoral understanding with the PSP party and the

general deterioration in Congress position all over the country and the soiled image of Biju Patnaik and his close friends were responsible for the success of the Jana Congress and the collapse of the Congress. The tact, shrewdness and political maturity of Mahatab seemed to have played a great role in engineering the spectacular victory of the Jana Congress at the hustings.

Soon after the elections, a coalition government of the Jana Congress and the Swatantra was ushered in and the leader of the Swatantra Party, R. N. Singh Deo, became the Chief Minister and the leader of the Jana Congress, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, became the Deputy Chief Minister. It seems that at first the Jana Congress was planning and insisting to make Mahatab the Chief Minister. Butto pay respect to the desire of Rajaji,[29] (C. Rajagopalchari), the founder of the Swatantra Party, the Jana Congress agreed to allow R. N. Singh Deo to head the ministry. Singh Deo became the Chief Minister on 8th March 1967. The Jana Congress and Swatantra Ministry included 6 members from the Jana Congress and 11 from the Swatantra excluding the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister. The ministry made a good start with good understanding between the coalition partners.

The new structure of political forces, which arose as an aftermath of 1967 elections, underwent major changes in the succeeding year. In fact politics in Orissa has always been in a state of flux. There occurred some irreconciliable differences between Biju Patnaik and the Congress High Command.[30] Biju Patnaik was refused a Rajya Sabha ticket by the party High Command. Having feared that his fortune was in the dark in the Congress party, he, along with his followers, left the party and formed his own regional party, the Utkal Congress, in May 1970.

Once Biju Patnaik went out of the Congress party, Mahatab preferred a "home-coming" -- back to the Congress fold. It was the hostility towards Biju that had made Mahatab leave the party in 1966. Now that the Biju faction was out of the Congress Party, the eventual return of the Mahatab group could not long be ruled out.[31]

Meanwhile, Mahatab, owing to the release of Mudholkar's report, was in a big quandary. He was only waiting for an opportunity to wriggle out of his commitments to the coalition government.[32]

The Swatantra—Jana Congress coalition till that point was quite smooth and stable. It succeeded in creating a new record in the constitutional history of India by remaining in power for such a long time. But the events in 1970 altered the political situation which had powerful impact upon the coalition. The period of extremely coherent relationship between the two partners of the coalition government came to an end as political difference between them cropped up.[33]

The Mahatab faction in the Jana Congress tried its best to break away from the coalition and merge into the Congress (R). But the President of the party, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the general secretary, Surendra Nath Patnaik, and a few others opposed the idea of going back to the Congress,[35] In December 1970, serious differences arose between the coalition partners on the "Kendu Leaf issue"[36] and the decision of Singh Deo, the Chief Minister, to appoint a commission to study Mudholkar's report, led Mahatab to make all out efforts to break the coalition. His efforts did not fail. The Jana Congress withdrew from the coalition government on 5 January 1971. The decision to break the coalition seemed to have been guided more by personal interests than by principles. The real issue behind the difference of the two parties was not the Kendu Leaf controversy but the follow up action on the report of Justice Mudhokar which investigated a number of allegations against Mahtab.[37] After this most of the members of the Jana Congress with Mahatab joined the Congress (R) on 15 January 1971, before the 1971 mid-term election, but Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the President of the Jana Congress, with a few of his supporters decided to continue in the party.

The second mid-term elections to the Orissa Legislative Assembly were held simultaneously with the Lok Sabha elections of 1971. Interestingly as many as four Congress parties participated in the 1971 elections. They were Congress (O), Congress (R). Utkal Congress and Jana Congress. Pabitra Mohan Pradhan perhaps misjudged the political weather of the state and unsuccessfully led the party to the 1971 elections although the party had already faced its doom before the election, after Mahatab's exit.

The Jana Congress fielded 66 candidates in 1971 as against 49 in the previous election. Only one candidate out of 66 fielded was successful in 1971. (See Table : 2).

Table : 2. 1971 Mid-term election to the Orissa Legislative Assembly.

Sl. No.	Name of the parties	Contested	Seats. won	% of seats	Valid votes in %
1.	Congress (R)	(129)	51	(36.4)	28.18
2.	Congress (O)	(50)	1	(0.76)	1.81
3.	Utkal Congress	(137)	33	(23.6)	23.83
4.	Swatantra	(115)	36	(28.8)	17.44
5.	P. S. P.	(50)	4	(2.8)	6.08
6.	C. P. I.	(29)	4	(2.8)	4.79
7.	Jharkhand	(15)	4	(2.8)	1.68
8.	C. P. I. (M)	(11)	2	(1.4)	1.02
9.	Jana Congress	(66)	1	(0.76)	5.16
10.	Independents and others	(192)	4	(2.8)	9.83

All the leaders of the party were defeated with wide margins. Majority of candidates lost security deposits. The Jana Congress fielded 2 candidates for the Lok Sabha elections of 1971 and neither of them was successful (See Table : 3).

Table : 3. 1971 Lok Sabha elections.

Sl. No.	Name of the parties	Contested	Seats. won	% of seats	Valid votes in %
1.	Congress (R)	(19)	15	(75.0)	38.46
2.	Congress (O)	(6)	0	(–)	2 25
3.	Swatantra	(13)	3	(15)	15.91
4.	Utkal Congress	(20)	1	(5)	23.60
5.	Jana Congress	(2)	0	(–)	1.35
6.	C. P. I.	(3)	1	(5)	4.31
7.	P. S. P.	(6)	0	(–)	6.91
8.	C. P. I. (M)	(1)	0	(–)	1.02
9.	Jharkhand	(2)	0	(–)	1.66
10.	Independents and others	(9)	0	(–)	3.84
	Total :		20		100%

The Jana Congress also participated in 1974 elections to the State Assembly. It fielded 42 candidates and only one of them was successful (see Table : 4) from the scheduled caste consti-

tuency of Talcher. Brundaban Behera who repeated his performance of 1971, got himself elected. Its leader, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, was again defeated with a wide margin by a Congress candidate. Needless to say, he had also lost the 1971 assembly election.

The electoral performance of the Jana Congress is thus a story of instant success followed by an abrupt failure leading to its ultimate doom. H. K. Mahatab seemingly made all the difference. This man alone hammered the last nail on the coffin of his creation. This was an interesting growth in demise and a ponderable question for posterity to fumble how personal interest mars democratic growth in this part of the country. The doom of the Jana Congress became imminent without Mahatab's shrewd political manipulation. Thus the party's poor performance in the 1971 mid-term election was no surprise and it was almost routed in the 1974 assembly elections.

Table : 4. 1974 Mid-term Election to the Orissa Legislative Assembly.

Sl. No.	Name of the parties	Contested	Seats won	% of seats	Valid votes in %
1.	Congress	(135)	69	(47%)	37.44
2.	Congress (O)	(17)	–	( )	0.51
3.	Utkal Congress	(95)	35	(24%)	26.45
4.	Swatantra	(56)	21	(13.5%)	12.08
5.	C. P. I.	(14)	7	(4.5%)	4.87
6.	C. P. I. (M)	(8)	3	(2.9%)	1.11
7.	Socialist	(17)	2	(1.4%)	1.77
8.	Jana Congress	(42)	1	(0.53%)	1.17
9.	Jharkhand	(12)	1	(0.53%)	0.60
10.	Independent	(299)	7	(4.5%)	13.94

Party in Power and Party in Opposition

An evaluation of the performance of the Jan Congress, a regional party, may be made in the context of the sub-regional conflicts and factional politics that had been rooted in the political soil of the state since the early thirties of the present century.

Even though the Jana Congress was formed in 1966, its

leaders who had been elected in the Congress ticket in 1961 had started acting as dissidents within the parent party since 1961 itself. They had joined hands with a few opposition leaders of the state in exposing the corruption of the state Congress leadership.[38] Their criticisms against the Congress leadership in the state were so revealing and damaging that the letter was totally demoralised and the image of the whole organisation was also completely tarnished. After that they left the Congress party and formed their party, the Jana Congress.

The Congress shared power with the Swatantra Party in a coalition government that came to power after 1967 general election and continued in office up to January 1971. Thus the Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition ruled the state for nearly four years.

The Orissa coalition government of the Jana Congress and Swatantra party had the unique distinction of surviving longer than any other coalition ministry which cropped up after the 4th general elections. The coalition ensured an atmosphere of governmental stability in the state. It was able to provide an orderly framework for decision-making on several controversial issues and could avoid crisis on many occasions. The coalition partners took necessary precautionary measures to overcome possible differences. The outcome was the stability at the governmental level which was considered as the first and foremost achievement of the coalition government.

The coalition government took a bold step by abolishing the age-old land revenue system with effect from 1st April 1967. The government also appointed the Khanna Commission of Enquiry to investigate charges against Biju Patnaik and Biren Mitra[39] and appointed Justice Mudholkar to examine charges against their own coalition ministers levelled at by the Congress legislators.[40] It was the first time that a government in office displayed the courage to submit itself to judicial scrutiny for the sake of higher values in personal as well as in public life. The government tried to eradicate corruption from public life.

Although the coalition ensured stability at the govermental level as well as in the administration by taking a determined bid to root out corruption, yet it failed to undertake any spectacular developmental activity in a backward state like Orissa. It lacked dynamism in its outlook as well as in actions. It failed to improve

the economic standard of the agricultural and adivasi section of the population. The coalition was, no doubt, a stable government but 'the stable govenment was content to be a minimum government.' For the sake of prudence and cautionsness it sacrificed action. At the altar of political stability was sacrificed economic development. The coalition virtually turned out to be an orderly government with minimum achievement.

Conclusion

Jana Congress was a state party. Its birth was not regionalism-oriented. Its founders did not champion the interests of any neglected region of the state. Nor were they really motivated by their concern for the upliftment of Orissa. They were important leaders of the Congress Party for a long time and they would have continued in it had they continued to play the tune. But they left the party when they were forcibly pushed from the centre of the stage. After they formed the Jana Congress, they expressed their faith in the Congress ideology and adopted its organization pattern. They did not build any new ideology. Nor did they project any radical programme. Like Congress leaders they harped on Gandhism and like them also they practiced politicking and manipulation. Thus they, for all practical purposes, continued to be congress people with only a new label in order to formally establish their separate identity.

The Jana Congress was not a rebel party, it did not have a rebel ideology. But it grew out of a rebellion by a group of disgruntled Congress leaders against the dominant faction of the party which enjoyed the support of the central High Command. If some Congress leaders were corrupt, so were some dissidents who formed the Jana Congress. Corruption and dishonesty were, of course, accorded a lot of importance in propaganda battles of the Jana Congress. But these were not the real issues. Very few Jana Congress leaders might have had a penchant for "clean administration." The dissidents were as much parts of the Congress culture. As its dominant actors. The former were not less shrewd and manipulating than the latter. The bone of contention, in fact, was the personal interest of dissidents. Because of their common hostility towards the ruling faction, they formed

a faction in order to capture power. Having failed to do it, they decided to leave the party and form a new party. Thus the clash of factional interests was at the roof of the party split at the state level. Needless to emphasize, these factions were not based on ideologies. These were primarily ego-oriented, meant to satisfy the personal interest of the factional leaders.

It would not be out of context to state that the Ganatantra Parishad, another regional party of the state, championed a cause so dear to the people of western Orissa. It highlighted the backwardness of western Orissa for which the political and administrative elites of coastal Orissa were largely responsible by their attitude of "being neglect." No wonder, the Ganatantra Parishad survived much longer than other regional parties of the state like the Jana Congress and the Utkal Congress whose constituencies were neither neglected areas of the state, nor the state as a whole but themselves and their supporters guided primarily by their own interests. Personality, no doubt, plays a role in determining the destiny of any party including regional parties. Mahatab, of course, played a great role not only in building the Jana Congress, but also in bringing about its downfall. But, in the longer perspective of strengthening a regional party, cause is more important than personality. The Jana Congress after some time fell a side mainly because, in the eyes of the people, it did not champion any regional cause, although it professed to fight for the cause of Orissa *vis-a-vis* the centre.

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18

UTKAL CONGRESS

J. K. Mohapatra
K. L. Mishra

The study of Utkal Congress is important for the following reasons : First, it was a strong regional party and the phenomenon of regional parties which fast declined some years ago seems to be recovering its old strength and salience. Secondly, the two leaders who have dominated the politics of Orissa more convincingly than anybody else are H. K. Mahtab and Biju Patnaik. It is debatable whose contribution between them to Orissa is more important. But in terms of playing a prominent role in the state politics for a long period, Biju Patnaik is at least the equal of, if not more dominant than, Mahtab. And it is Biju who was the father-figure and unchallenged leader of Utkal Congress. Thus the study of Utkal Congress is not only of topical importance, but also helpful in looking into many key and complex dynamics of Orissa politics. Thirdly, Utkal Congress was born in 1970 out of the factional conflict in the Congress Party which almost from its inception has been invariably characterised by varying degrees of factionalism. Thus a close look at different aspects of Utkal Congress would enable us to explore different dimensions of factionalism. No student of Orissa politics can afford to ignore group conflict as an important variable.

In early fifties, Biju visibly entered politics as one of the lieutenants of Mahtab. (The other two of his lieutenants were Biren Mitra and Nilamani Routray). These three worked hard for their patron. But after some years they realized that Mahtab was not giving them lift in politics. This discontent gradually mounted and made them increasingly disenchanted with Mahtab. This led to the growth of conflict between him and his "three Musketeers". Biju's success in breaking the Mahtab-Singh Deo coalition ministry in 1959 and his big success in the mid-term Assembly election of 1961 seemed to raise a steep wall between the two sides. Having failed to retaliate against Biju, Mahtab

along with his followers left Congress in 1966 and formed a new party called Jana Congress.[1]

The Orissa Congress was completely under Biju's grip from 1960 to 1970, both during the period when the party was in power and in opposition. In the 1967 election Biju lost the election but his grip over the party remained unshaken. At that time at the centre, Congress was facing serious crises because of differences of opinion over the choice of the presidential candidate of the party and this development in the 1969 Presidential election had its echo in Orissa. At that critical juncture Biju failed to make the right move in the chessboard of politics.

In spite of Biju's supremacy in the party some members under the changing circumstances started leaving him. Biju sided with Sanjeeva Reddy, the official Congress candidate in the Presidential election of 1969. But V. V. Giri who was Mrs Gandhi's "conscience candidate" won the election and became the President. The Presidential election was a battle of survival for Mrs Gandhi fighting against the Syndicate led by S. Nijalingappa, the party President. The voting pattern in Orissa revealed that a group of Congressmen acted in defiance of Biju and he was no longer the unquestioned leader in Orissa Congress.

Biju after the presidential election promptly expressed his suppport to Mrs Gandhi. But in the new scheme of things, Nandini Satapathy got more importance than Biju. This led to serious differences of opinion between the Biju faction.and the Nandini faction in Orissa Congress. The situation then headed towards a crisis.

Biju passed through a difficult time since 1967. He was defeated in the election to the State Assembly. His attempt to become a member of the Congress Working Committee also failed, when Mrs Gandhi preferred Nandini to him for this in 1970. Then came the crucial Rajya Sabha election. The Congress Party had to choose a candidate for the election to Rajya Sabha from Orissa Assembly. Biju tried his best to win the Congress nomination. He was successful in getting the support of the entire Congress legislature party for his nomination. The party at his behest recommended his name to the Central Parliamentary Board. Biju himself pleaded with Mrs Gandhi for his nomination. But the Prime Minister had different ideas. The Congress

Parliamentary Board rejected the recommendation of Orissa Congress.[2] Narayan Patro, a little known politician of Ganjam District, who became the party's nominee, lost the election. It was Biju's last chance to re-establish himself. His failure to get the party nomination led to a big change in the course of events in Orissa politics.

The party High Command accused Biju of sabotaging Patro's election. Biju was also mentally preparing himself to quit the Congress, after the Rajya Sabha election. Biju had two options; he had either to resign or to face disciplinary action by the party. Biju opted for the first option and resigned from the Congress on 6 April 1970[3]. On 16 and 17 May 1970 the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee took the decision to free itself from the AICC and functions as an independent state party in the greater interest of the people of Orissa.[4] Nandini Satapaty, Binayak Acharya and a few of their supporters boycotted the meeting. In the wake of the decision of PCC on 17th May, the Utkal Congress came into existence.

Biju, thus being confident of his widespread support base in Orissa, openly defied the High Command whose authority appeared then to be suspect. Proclaiming himself as the champion of the interests of the State whose poverty was evident then as it is now he took the lead in forming the Utkal Congress, a state based party with most of the members of the Congress legislature party behind him while seven of them chose to stay with the parent party. His ideal was the DMK which had proved to be a great success as a regional party in Tamil Nadu. The Utkal Congress was a product of what Biju visualized as the development of neo-monolithic state parties on the basis of their opposition to the Centre. In no time the new party caught the imagination of the people of Orissa and received wide support in the state.

Leadership

The formation of Utkal Congress did not result in the emergence of new leaders. All of its important leaders were already dominant figures in the Congress party before they left it. They had long experience of playing politics. In the general, they were

well-educated and hailed from the upper stratum of the society. All of them belonged to the coastal belt where the party organisation gained strength in a short time. It is important to note that not a single leader of the party was a known advocate of sub-regionalism.

In general, Utkal Congress leaders belonged either to the Karan or Cultivator castes with a few exceptions like Prahallad Mallick who belonged to the scheduled caste. However, the leadership of the latter had little to do with their caste base. These leaders proved themselves as capable organisers and formed a link between the Gandhian traditions of the pre-independence era and politics of competition and manipulation of the post-independence period. This group of political elites wielded power in Orissa's political structure right form the second half of the fifties.

Ideology of The Party

Ideology was not the rallying point of the new political groups, which formed regional parties in different states. This was more true of the splinter groups of the Congress which formed regional parties. The birth of the Utkal Congress was prompted more by personal factors than by any political and ideological conflicts with its parent party, the Congress.

It is difficult to identify the Utkal Congress with any particular ideology because the party had a very short span of existence and during this period it could not adhere to a set of ideology due to its oscillating position. Till 1974, just before the mid-term poll, the party passed through a transitional phase and it was faced with the dilemma of choosing between two courses : whether it should join the opposition camp and throw a challenge to the Congress or it should go back to the parent organisation. The party, however, took the second course in the beginning by deciding to come back to the Congress fold. This, however, remained a temporary affair, for the party finally decided to adopt the first course and re-emerged as a separate party in November 1972. The Utkal Congress thereafter became a part of the 'Pragati Alliance' and ultimately merged with the Bhartiya Lok Dal. Thus the ambivalent and wavering attitude of the party

had an apparently significant impact upon its ideology.

The ideology of the party largely vacillated from the centrist policy of the Congress Party to the conservative policy of the Swatantra Party. Ideologically both the Congress and Utkal Congress were identical in their approach to the social, economic and political problems. Even sixteen months after the birth of the Utkal Congress when the party was a partner with Swatantra in the coalition government, Biju, fresh from the victory in the by-election, paid rich tributes to Mrs Indira Gandhi and declared that ideologically he had no differences with her.[6] Whatever might have been the implications of such statements the fact remained that Biju seldom tried to ideologically distinguish his party from the Congrees.

This was probably the reason which prompted him to take an anti-centre stand to maintain the distinct identity of his party. In 1971 the party put emphasis on democracy and socialism, which was identical with the Congress policy and both held the view that "the ideologies of both the extreme left and right are a serious threat to the country".[7] The Utkal Congress in 1971, gave topmost priority to industrialisation; it recommended the establishment of big industries for harnessing the natural resources of the state. The party advocated the state's claim for a greater share of Central resources and started a vigorous campaign for Orissa's economic development. Biju made public accusations against the Central government for its tardiness in allotting resources for urgent development projects in the state. The Utkal Congress raised the slogan that, Orissa can no longer be a colony of India"[8]. Biju developed his concept of state autonomy apparently for winning electoral support. While the DMK of Tamilnadu professed a strong separatist movement and the Akali Dal an extreme form of Communalism, the Utkal Congress demanded more economic power and freedom for the state to remove Orissa's centuries-old backwardness and poverty. Biju believed that the promotion of strong regional parties would give birth to "a truely federal, united states of India".[9]

On the whole the ideology and political programme of Utkal Congress lacked the strength to sustain and perpetuate the party. Ideologically Utkal Congress was weak. There was significant change, in the ideological views of its leaders in the course of

time as the party made modifications in its ideology when it formed the government with the Swatantra after the 1971 elections and when it formed the Pragati alliance in 1974.

Electoral Performance

Ever since the Utkal Congress was born, the party prepared its election strategy to defeat the Congress in the state and to capture power. The Utkal Congress which included several veteran Congress leaders in the fold, decided to go alone in the 1971 election and it fielded its candidates in as many as 138 constituencies out of the total 140 in the state. Biju's powerful hold over the organizational net-work seemed to have prompted his party to set up candidates covering almost the whole state. This ambitious design, however, had its own drawbacks. The Utkal Congress had little realized that the party's main support came from the coastal districts. It unwisely extended the area of operation to all the hill districts. This therefore diffused its attention from its real support bases. In some cases also candidates were selected on the consideration of personal loyalty to Biju or on the "first come first served" basis.

1971 elections did not return any party with absolute majority. The Utkal Congress, being a new entrant in the electoral field, made a brilliant debut with 32 seats in its bag as against 51 of the Congress[10]. The Utkal Congress had fielded its candidates for all the 20 Lok Sabha seats in 1971. But it was able to win only one seat whereas the Congress secured 15 seats.[11]

Among the notable defeats and victories of the Utkal Congress in 1971 was the record defeat of Biju himself the founder of the party. What was more important about him was that he contested simultaneously from four Assembly Constituencies and one Parliamentary Constituency and in all the places he was defeated. Among the victories, the remarkable victory was that of Prahallad Mallick, an important scheduled caste member who returned from two constituencies in 1971. He returned successfully simultaneously from a reserved constituency and also from a general constituency.

The bye-elections to fill up the four vacant Assembly seats were held on 22 Sept. 1971 and the Utkal Congress won in two Constituencies. Biju entered the Assembly from Rajnagar with

a massive victory, by which, to some extent, he regained his prestige.

After the elections the two political adversaries, Biju and R. N. Singh Deo, joined hands. The Utkal Congress and the Swatantra came to an understanding with each other and they together with Jharkhand formed a "United Front". In their attempt to form a coalition government in the state, they proposed to invite a "compromise candidate" to lead the coalition. They convinced Biswanath Das, an old Congress leader and Ex-Governor, who had already retired from politics, to become the leader. Ultimately the coalition government under the leadership of Biswanath Das came to office on 22 March 1971. The Das Ministry included six members each from the Utkal Congress and the Swatantra and one from the Jharkhand, excluding the Chief Minister. Das subsequently was elected as an independent candidate from Rourkela in the by-election held in September 1971.

The political developments in between 1971 and 1974 were important from two aspects. The political realignment that took shape after 1971 brought about fresh political instability that led to the quick fall of the two ministries : first the Swatantra-Utkal Congress coalition ministry and later a Congress ministry which took over charge under Mrs. Nandini Satapathy within a period of hardly three years. Consequently a mid-term election was held in the state in early 1974. The second important aspect was the formation of the Pragati Party of which the Utkal Congress became one of the constituents before the 1974 election.

The emergence of the Pragati Party before 1974 election was a significant development in the direction of bipolarization of the party system in the state. The combined opposition forces under the banner of Pragati Party displayed the consolidation of a powerful challenge to the Congress. Biju Patnaik could realise the realities of the situation. His previous attempts at both non-Congress coalition building and merger with Congress had miserably failed. In his desperate attempt to capture power in the ensuing elections, he directed all his resources and efforts towards forming a broad-based, integrated anti-Congress electoral alliance. In order to enhance the credibility of the alliance

with the people and emphasize its unitary character, it was decided to discard the traditional patterns of coalition building.[12] An altogether new party called Pragati Party was set up with the alliance of the Utkal Congress, the Swatantra and the S. S. P.

The Pragati Party, however; could not become a unified homogeneous party before 1974 election. It essentially remained an electoral alliance of the Utkal Congress, the Swatantra and the S. S. P. The parties were not prepared to lose their identities before the election.

The Pragati alliance had forced the Congress to seek allies before the election. A bulk of the P. S. P. had already joined the Congress which compensated, to some extent, the loss suffered by the party due to the exit of the Biju faction. The Congress with a view to building up wider electoral base, negotiated with the CPI for adjustment of seats.

The election to the 147 member state assembly was held on 22 and 24 February 1974. The Utkal Congress contested from 95 constituencies as against 135 of the Congress. The Utkal Congress contested in 138 seats in 1971 which was 43 more than the number of seats it contested in 1974. The decrease in the number of seats contested in 1974 was mainly due to its alliance with the Swatantra and Sanjukta Socialist Party. The Utkal Congress and the Swatantra faced each other in "friendly contests" in six constituencies.

The Pragati alliance secured 58 as against the Congress's 69 and C. P. I' s 7. The Constituents of the Pragati Party – the Utkal Congress, the Swatantra and S. S. P. – secured 35, 21 and 2 seats respectively,[13] in the Assembly. The performance of the Utkal Congress in 1974 was almost the same as in 1971. But in terms of the percentage of success of the total seats contested in both the elections, the Utkal Congress could considerably improve in 1974 because of adjustment of seats with other parties.

The electoral performance of the Utkal Congress was thus a story of instant success. What is more important, it could sustain itself for some time unlike the Jana Congress which faced its doom soon.

Party in Power and Party in Opposition

The Utkal Congress was born on the eve of the 1971 elections.

It had the opportunity of participating in the government twice. First the Utkal Congress shared power with the Swatantra and Jharkhand in a coalition ministry that came to power after 1971 election. This coalition ministry under the leadership of Biswanath Das remained in power from April 1971 to June 1972. After the Utkal Congress leaders withdrew from coalition, and joined Congress, the Satapathy ministry was formed in June 1972 and continued till March 1973. In case of the first ministry the Utkal Congress maintained its separate identity. But in case of the latter, it merged with the Congress and again after a brief innings in governments it regained its separate identity. This makes our task quite difficult to explain its role and achievement in governments. No doubt, the party's obscure position had great impact upon the functions of the government and quite naturally the two short lived governments in which the Utkal Congress participated had hardly any notable achievments to their credit. If a political party's participation in government in itself is considered as an achievement, then it must be admitted that the Utkal Congress's achievement was mark-worthy as it almost continuously remained in power from 1971 to 1973. Nevertheless, mention may be made of a few of the minor achievements of the two ministries of which they were constituents.

The Swatantra-Utkal Congress coalition ministry took an important step with regard to the formation of rational rural tax structure. It made provisions for the first time for land ceiling measures. According to the provision, the ceiling was brought down to 10 standard acres.[14] During the short tenure of the government, there was slight increase in the total gross area irrigated. 9,89,600 hectares of land were brought under irrigation facilities in 1971-72.

The Satapathy ministry which had only 8½ months, duration and thus still shorter than the previous coalition ministry, had hardly any noteworthy achievement to its credit. However, mention may be made of achievements of the Satapathy ministry. There were not nationalization of Kendu-leaf trade and the land reform measures. It seemed that Utkal Congressmen in the Congress ministry had played a significant role in respect of these two issues. Another achievement was the "Orissa Land Reform Act" which was amended according to the decision of the Chief Minister's Conference held in July 1972. To this bill also several

Congressmen in the legislature registered their strong dissent although it secured full support of the Utkal Congressmen in legislature.

Utkal Congress leaders were dissident Congressmen. They had voiced their strong criticisms against the Central Government, particulary Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister. They criticised the Central Government for following a "step-motherly" attitude towards Orissa. However, their role as an opposition party in Orissa politics was very negligible. Because in 1974 it lost its identity as a regional party and joined the Bharatiya Lok Dal.

The Utkal Congress failed to undertake any spectacular developmental activity in a backward state like Orissa. It lacked dynamism in its outlook as well as actions. It failed to improve the economic standard of the agricultural and adivasi section of the population. It seems that the Utkal Congress leaders sacrificed economic development at the altar of personal political gain.

Conclusion

The above account points to the following :

1. Utkal Congress was born out of the conflict between two groups in the Congress Party of Orissa. One was led by H. K. Mahtab while the other was headed by Biju Patnaik. Initially both Mahtab—the "leader"—and Biju, the "pupil", belonged to the same faction. But in course of time, due to the percieved clash of interests between them, they fell out and tried to pull each other's leg.

2. Utkal Congress was not an ideological party. It seldom tried to sharply differentiate itself from the basic ideals of the Congress Party. It was ego-conflict rather than any ideological consideration which led to the formation of Utkal Congress.

3. In one sense Utkal Congress was a regional party. It was confined to the state of Orissa—that too, mostly to its coastal belt. Its leaders, by and large, belonged to the coastal districts. But it rarely sought to futher only the interests of this region. It, on the other hand, professed to promote the interests of whole of Orissa which allegedly suffered due to the neglect by the Centre. In this sense Utkal Congress was different from the Ganatantra

Parishad which primarily sought to champion the interests of Western Orissa from which most of its leaders hailed.[16]

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19

ELECTION POLITICS AND VOTING BEHAVIOUR OF ORISSA

Amiya Kumar Paricha

The importance of elections, particularly in a democratic country cannot be overstated. Elections give people an opportunity to elect the representatives of their own choice. Elections provide a chance to the candidates of various parties to go to the electorate with their party ideologies to seek mandate to rule them.

Elections are crucial to any democratic country. They generate interest for all the citizens more than any other event in the country. Election is described as a major effective instrument and most significant source of politicization. "Nothing politically mobilizes the rural people so much as does election. Through the election even an ordinary villager comes to share the democratic experience of the country in a most concrete and trenchant form".[1]

Yogesh Atal, a social anthropologist, who has also done some good work on political behaviour, says that "it is worth pondering over how in a country like India where there is considerable illiteracy and economic backwardness, the democratic process has been sustained with such a remarkable poise".[2]

Ganguly and Ganguly in their study of the electoral behaviour of West Bengal observe that, the first question that faces a citizen at the time of an election is whether he should exercise his franchise or not. They point out that for many individuals the act of voting is the only political activity.[3] In general the voters' turnout in Indian elections has been very high. Many times even in reserved constituencies more than 50 per cent of voters exercise their franchise. It is possible that many of those who cast their votes have a low level of political awareness and have no clear idea about the significance of their votes. Keeping this in mind Sirsikar points out that, the electorate in a democracy can be regarded as the largest decision-making arena. He further says that it is of interest to the social scientist to know who passively

and ignorantly swell the ranks.[4] India being primarily a country of villages, the voting behaviour of villagers has attracted the attention of many scholars. They have studied the various factors which influence the voting choice of villagers. They have also examined the role of *vote banks* and the nature of campaigning while Jena and Baral have referred to the declining efficacy of vote banks.[5] Varma and Narain have drawn attention to the difficulties and problems that the candidates face in reaching the rural voters. The latter say that political parties have better organization nuclei in urban areas than in rural and reserved constituencies.[6] Jena observes that the political culture of Orissa is essentially "oligopolistic" and in such a culture the regional clusters with religious and linguistic affiliations represent powerful primordial loyalties that weaken the system's legitimacy and its national unity.[7] This implies that voting behaviour would be significantly affected by regional, local, communal and other parochial considerations. According to Baral and Baral, the voters of Orissa are not ideologically oriented; nor are they inclined to have a hard look at issues. They are mostly personality oriented and personalities appearing at the central stage of politics would significantly influence the definition of issues by voters.[8] An attempt is made below to describe the various factors which influence the election politics and voting behaviour of Orissa. Further the elements of change and continuity, if any, present in the electoral history of the state would be highlighted. In particular the roles of political parties, politicians, vote banks and the nature of campaigning would be critically analysed.

Orissa, one of the most backward states in India, contains a large number of Harijans and Adivasis who constitute nearly forty per cent of its population While the Harijans are dispersed all over the state, the Adivasis inhabit the hill areas. The coastal Orissa is much more developed than its hinterland which includes the whole of western Orissa and a large part of southern Orissa. In other words, the districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore and half of Ganjam happen to be the elite areas of the state. This regional imbalance in development is to a great extent reflected in the voting behaviour of the state. The Ganatantra Parishad and the Swatantra Party which in 1950s and 1960s respectively were powerful in state politics were particularly strong in western

Orissa. On the other hand, whatever strength the left political parties have in the state is mainly concentrated in the coastal Orissa.

Before 1948-49, a large part of present Orissa consisted of princely states and zamindaris whose rulers were generally authoritarian. However, many of them had good control over their subjects who were emotionally attached to the former. This bondage even after independence remained strong in many areas. That is the reason why for many years Maharajas and Zamindars played an important role in state politics. Throughout 1950s and 1960s in many Assembly constituencies the members of these ruling families were elected in large numbers. However, with the passage of time their appeal for the people has greatly lost its strength. It is no surprise, that in recent elections either to the Assembly or to Lok Sabha the electoral success of these feudal elements has largely declined.

The main base of the Congress Party in the state has long been the members of the minorities as well as those of the depressed communities. In particular the Harijans, Adivasis, Christians, Muslims and the Telegu-speaking people of South Orissa have more or less remained the strong support base of the party. They generally believe that the Congress Party is the custodian of their interests. The members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes fear that the reservation for them in education as well as in employment would go the moment the Congress is defeated in general elections. The same is true of the electoral behaviour of religious minorities of the state.

Harijans and Adivasis generally vote *en bloc*. On the eve of election day, in general body meetings, they make their final voting choice. Even though it is true that they, by and large, vote for the Congress Party, they still gather at a meeting place of the village to decide whom they will vote for and how and when they will go to the polling booth on election day. In the past, on election matters the decision of the village head was final. Now-a-days the villagers look to a few of their village leaders, especially the Ward Member who, in course of time, has become more powerful than the village head if the same man is not holding both the posts. This cohesion and solidarity in electoral behaviour is however more true of tribals than Harijans.

This is mainly due to the fact that Harijans, unlike tribals, live in mixed villages dominated by the clean caste people. Thus the factionalism among clean caste members is reflected in the voting behaviour of Harijans. Further, the Harijans, being relatively more educated and modernized than tribals, are less prone to be bound by community solidarity and the decision of one or two leaders. Like clean caste people they have started showing individualism in their voting behaviour. The linguistic minorities living in Orissa mainly include, Telegus, Bengalis and Hindi speaking people. Bengalis mostly inhabit the districts of Balasore and Mayurbhanj, which border West Bengal. Some people of Western Orissa speak Hindi although they are deeply attached to their own regional dialect called Sambalpuri. The Telegus who constitute the largest linguistic minority group in Orissa, live in large numbers in Southern Orissa, consisting of Ganjam and Koraput. The Telegus of Koraput and Ganjam districts were largely influenced in their electoral behaviour by Andhra which till the other day was one of the strongest bastions of the Congress Party. Because of their long attachment to the Congress party, they did not leave it in the last General Election, even though in the meantime Congress has been reduced to a weak party in Andhra. Just before the last Assembly election in 1958, there was a talk of the Telegu Desam Party fielding candidates in the districts of Koraput and Ganjam, but this did not come true. N. T. R., from across the border, appealed to the Telegus of Orissa to vote against the Congress. But his appeal did not have much impact upon the Telegu voters of Orissa. R. Jagannath Rao, who was a Minister of State at the Centre in 1960s happens to be one of the most well-known leaders in the State. Born in a Telegu family of Jeypore of Koraput district he has politically immigrated to Berhampur from where he has been elected to the Lok Sabha consecutively for the last four terms. The Telegus of Ganjam District in general regard him as the leader and support the Congress Party to which he belongs. In 1984 the Janata Party fielded an educated Telegu youth named Surjya Narayan Patro, a rich advocate of Berhampur, as its candidate for the Berhampur Parliamentary seat. The choice of Patra as the candidate was motivated by the calculation that the Telegu voters of Berhampur would be divided and as a result the main political

base of Jagannath Rao in the area would be eroded. But that did not happen. Rao, as before, won election by a great margin. The above account suggests that the Telegu speaking people of South Orissa continue to be a strong electoral base of the Congress Party.

In many states of India caste is a very powerful factor of election politics. The caste politics prevails in North India as well as in South India. To a large extent Eastern India, especially Bengal and Orissa, are free of caste politics. It is important to note that Bengal is one of the most politically developed states of India and it is the fort of Marxists in India. On the other hand, Orissa is one of the most backward states of the country and feudalism still reigns supreme in many parts of the state. Yet its political life is not dominated by the caste factor. The very fact that two minority castes, namely, Brahmin and Karan, happen to be the dominant castes of the state is a testimony of the above statement. They hardly constitute ten per cent of the population of the state, but their influence in the Orissa Politics is overwhelming. The people of Orissa, at the state level, are not largely guided by the caste factor in their electoral behaviour. In some local elections like panchayat elections and co-operative elections, caste, to some extent, may be a mobilising factor. But, by and large, it has much less influence in Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. Many low, medium and low castes of the state have their own associations at the regional and state level but these are primarily socio-cultural in nature. They are rarely mobilised for electoral purposes.

Orissa is mostly populated by Hindus. The Muslim population of the state is very small and they are concentrated in a few pockets. As a result, in those pockets they are an important factor of electoral politics. For example, there are a large number of Muslims living in Kendrapara and Bhadrak areas. So their support becomes crucial at the time of elections, both local and general. It is difficult for any candidate to be elected from these places without their support. Being a minority community the Muslims of Orissa tend to vote *en bloc*. They are generally known as supporters of the Congress Party, which they believe, is the custodian of their interests. However, if they think that the Congress is doing harm to them they would immediately switch over to the Opposition. Exactly this seems to have happened

during the recent by-election in Kendrapara parliamentary constituency. After the Supreme Court judgement on Shabano case many Muslims all over India, including those in Orissa felt very hurt. Their discontent against the Congress Party was immediately reflected in their electoral behaviour. Most of the Muslim voters seemed to support the Janata candidate, Syed Sahabuddin, in a Bihar Lok Sabha constituency, and in Kendrapara constituency of Orissa, the Muslim voters apparently cast their votes for Sarat Dev, the Janata candidate. Both Sahabuddin and Dev eventually emerged as winners.

Christians are not a decisive force either in economy or in politics of the state. However, they are not a negligible factor in elections. A large number of Christians live in tribal districts of the state. Most of them have been converted into Christianity during last twenty years. Though different in religion they are not much different from other tribals of the respective areas in other aspects of life, like food habit, dress, housing and culture. In fact, where Hindu and Christian tribals live in the same village they maintain a large degree of village unity and on election matters they take collective decisions. In general they support the Congress Party though in 50s and 60s in western Orissa some of them voted for local rulers because of their traditional feudal loyalty. Some Christian tribals of Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh districts seem to be actively supporting the cause of Jharkhand movement. In recent days the movement is apparently gaining strength in these parts of Orissa. In some areas the Christians take guidelines from their religious leaders at the time of elections. This is particularly true of Phulbani district. The church plays an active role in election.

The electoral scene in Orissa has most of the times been dominated by the Congress Party. The legacy of the freedom struggle, the vast resources at its disposal and the advantage of staying in power have been largely responsible for this. Further, personality has also, to some extent, influenced the voting behaviour of the people. For many people both in urban and rural areas, leaders like Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi have been great magnetic forces. Even some state leaders like Mahtab and Biju Pattnaik have been able at different times to attract and influence a large number of people from different sections of the

Table—1. Party Positions in the Election to O. L. A. 1952-71.

Parties	1952	1957	1961	1967	1971
C. P. I.	7(5%)	9	4	7	4
C. P. M.	—	—	—	1	2
Congress	67(48%)	56	82	31	51
Congress (O)	—	—	—	—	1
Forward Block (M)	1	—	—	—	—
Jana Sangha	—	—	—	—	—
P. S. P.	—	11	10	21	4
Socialist	10(7%)	—	—	—	—
Swatantra	—	—	—	49	36
G. P.	31(22%)	51	37	—	—
Jharkhand	—	5	—	—	4
J. C.	—	—	—	26	1
S. U. C. I.	—	—	—	—	—
Utkal Congress	—	—	—	—	33
Independents & others	24	8	7	3	4

society.

In the 1952 Assembly elections, in the House of 140 Congress won 67 seats while 31 went to Ganatantra Parishad (G. P.). A sizeable number of seats were won by independents. The performance of the left parties was not impressive. The election results indicated that, while the Congress was strong in coastal Orissa, the Ganatantra Parishad did very well in western Orissa. The ex-feudal lords, most of whom joined the Ganatantra Parishad cashed in on their traditional hold over their ex-subjects. This election was a disappointment to the Congress Party. Its hope that the people would overwhelmingly support it because of its role in freedom movement was, to a great extent, belied. The next Assembly election was held in 1957. The results were a great disappointment for the Congress while the Ganatantra Parishad made tremendous gains. While 56 seats were won by the Congress, the Ganatantra Parishad bagged as many as 51 seats. There was not much change in the electoral performance of left parties. A number of independent candidates were again elected, although there was slight decrease in their number.

In 1961 a mid-term election was held to the Orissa Assembly. Under the dynamic leadership of a new leader named Biju

Table—2. Party Position in the Election to O. L. A. 1974-1985.

Parties	1974	1977	1980	1985
C. P. I.	7	1	4	1
C. P. M.	3	1	—	—
Congress	70	26	117	117
Congress (O)	—		—	—
Forward Block (M)	—	—	—	—
Jana Sangha	—	—	—	—
P. S, P.	—	—	—	—
Socialist	20	—	—	—
Swatantra	21	—	—	—
G. P.	—	—	—	—
Jharkhand	4	—	—	—
J. C.	1	—	—	—
S. U. C. I.	—	—	—	1
Utkal Congress	35	—	—	—
Janata	—	110	3	19
B. J. P.	—	—	—	—
B. L. D.	—	—	13	—
Cong. (U)	—	—	2	—
Independents & others	4	9	7	5+1 (J. O.)

Patnaik, the Congress Party gained a spectacular victory. It won as many as 82 seats, while the Ganatantra Parishad managed to win only 37 seats. Though the stronghold of Ganatantra Parishad over western Orissa remained more or less undisturbed it could not repeat its performance of 1957. Other small parties managed to win a few seats each without showing much promise.

In 1967 Assembly elections the Congress suffered a miserable defeat. Out of 140 seats, 48 seats were captured by Swatantra, while only 31 seats were won by the Congress. Jana Congress which had been formed only one year ago was able to bag 26 seats. The P. S. P., a small party in the state, secured 21 seats. The verdict of the people which went against the Congress was greatly influenced by the anger of the people caused by the failure of the Congress to fulfil its promises made at the time of previous elections. The image of Congress had been greatly tarnished by the severe corruption charges against top Congress leaders of

the state including Biju Patnaik. The defection of a large number of Congress leaders like H. K. Mahtab and P. M. Pradhan from the party in 1966 and greatly weakened it. Because of electoral alliance and understanding among opposition parties the anti-Congress votes, unlike in previous elections, were not divided this time. The two main opposition parties, namely, Swatantra and Jana Congress, had contested the election on a common platform. As they combinedly won absolute majority, they formed the government. Thus a successful electoral alliance was converted into a governmental alliance or coalition. One highlight of the election was that, Mahtab, the Jana Congress leader, was elected from two constituencies. Biju Patnaik, the Congress leader, was defeated at the hustings. Before the 1971 Assembly election took place there was again a split in the Congress Party of Orissa. The majority faction led by Biju Patnaik had left the party and formed a new party called Utkal Congress. Mahtab along with his supporters had come back to Congress. In the 1971 election no single party could win absolute majority. Congress won simple majority with 51 seats while Swatantra and Utkal Congress won 36 and 32 seats respectively. The performance of left parties was miserable. Though the Congress failed to win absolute majority, its tally of 51 seats was quite impressive. On the other hand, the Utkal Congress had expected to do very well in the election but it did not do that well. Its leader, Biju Patnaik, contested from four Assembly constituencies and one Lok Sabha constituency but he failed to win even one of them. In one sense it was a record though a negative one. However, after a few months he was elected to the Assembly in a by-election from Rajnagar constituency. The unexpectedly good performance of Congress in the election was due to the strong appeal of Mrs. Gandhi, who was then taking a few radical measures like Bank Nationalisation and *Garibi Hatao*. Further, the failure of the Utkal Congress and Swatantra to have forged an electoral alliance was of great help to Congress which benefited from the division of opposition votes.

In 1974, another election was held to the Legislative Assembly. The political situation in the state had taken a dramatic turn on the eve of election. The three top leaders of the state namely,

Mahtab, Biju and Singh Deo had joined hands to defeat Congress which was then controlled by Mrs. Nandini Satapathy. Mrs. Satapathy, before she became Chief Minister in 1972, was a Minister of State for information and Broadcasting at the centre. The three stalwarts mentioned above had formed an electoral combine named Pragat Party though the constituent parties fielded candidates with their respective party symbols. In spite of unity among the major opposition parties the Congress did very well by winning 69 seats. On the other hand, Utkal Congress got 36 seats and Swatantra won only 21 seats. The C. P. I. which had some sort of understanding with Congress secured 7 seats. The Congress which was assured of support by the C. P. I. and Jharkhand was allowed by the Governor to form the ministry.

The 1977 Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections were preceded by national emergency imposed by Mrs. Gandhi during 1975-77. The excesses and oppression committed during emergency had made the Congress unpopular. The candidates of Janata Party were praised as heros and fighters against injustice. In fact, in 1977 in many parts of the country except a few states of the south a strong anti-Congress feeling was blowing and the result was a great defeat of the Congress Party in both Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections in Orissa, The fact that the Congress got only 26 seats as against 110 seats by Janata is itself suggestive of electoral dynamics prevailing in the State. It seemed as if the Congress Party was swept away by a strong anti-Congress wave. In terms of electoral behaviour 1980 was the opposite of 1977. If there was a Janata wave in 1977, there came a Congress wave in 1980. Mrs. Gandhi who was the object of popular anger and criticism in 1977 took full advantage of the miserable failure of the Janata Party to rise up to the expectation of the people. The way the house of the Janata Party collapsed due to the internal quarrel made the party an object of ridicule and criticism by the people. All of a sudden, Indira Gandhi regained her appeal as "Indira Mother". The result was a tremendous success for her party in 1980 Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections. In Orissa the Janata was virtually crushed by the Congress in both Lok Sabha and Assembly Elections. Just before the Assembly election the state unit of Janata almost *en masse*

defected to Lok Dal. The state unit of Lok Dal was led by Biju Patnaik. In the Assembly election the Congress bagged as many as 117 seats while Janata and Lok Dal got 3 and 13 seats respectively. In the Lok Sabha election also all but one seat had been won by the Congress. The only non-Congress candidate to have won a Lok Sabha seat was the evergreen politician of Orissa, Biju Patnaik.*

In December 1984 Lok Sabha elections were held. In Orissa the Congress repeated its 1980 performance. While Biju was re-elected from Kendrapara all other seats went to Congress. In March 1985 elections were held to the Orissa Legislative Assembly. It was again a sweep for the Congress Party. It is important to note that barely two months before the Lok Sabha election, Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated and the mantle of leadership of the Congress Party as well as that of the nation fell on her only surviving son, Rajiv Gandhi. Though young and relatively inexperienced, he handled the difficult situations deftly and effectively. He gave the impression of a mature leadership. The voters were greatly influenced by his youth as well as by his maturity. Further, many voters backed him out of sympathy. The result was resounding success for the Congress Party in both Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. The 1984-85 election results suggested that Orissa had emerged as one of the bastions of the Congress Party.

Conclusion

Elections in Orissa have proved functional from the point of view of democratisation and political participation. The feudal grip over the electorate has gradually declined and the parochial bondage have over the years greatly lost their electoral appeal. The Harijan, Adivasis and other voters of depressed groups who in the past were afraid of exercising their franchise are coming in large numbers now-a-days to the polling booths. It is a different question whether they are highly politically conscious and whether they are rational voters. Perhaps, many of them are not. But the same criticism would largely apply to other voters of privileged groups. But the very fact that the weak elements of the society have awoken from their long slumber and

have shown the tendency to assert themselves is a great democratic achievement for the state.

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DYNAMICS OF DEFECTIONS IN ORISSA

Pramoda Kumar Panda

The Assembly elections held in Indian states in 1967 proved to be a severe blow to the Congress Party which failed to gain absolute majority in nine states. The monopoly of the Congress on Indian poilitcs which even predated the Independence day seemed to be under strong attack. But, in retrospect, one can say that the 1967 Assembly elections posed a greater danger to the Indian politics. Within a short time the phenomenon of "Aya Ram, Gaya Ram" came on the stage, creating considerable political instability and uncertainty. Without any scruple elected legislators changed their party affiliations and switched over to other political parties. In some cases, on leaving the parent party (or parties), they formed new parties. This change of party, after being elected on its ticket, became known as defection.[1] In this paper we are using the term 'defection' in its legal sense. It is applicable to elected members of the state Assemblies or the Parliament. Outside these legislatures a lot of party-change is taking place. For example, one high functionary of a political party who is not a member of either the state legislators or of the Parliament, may join another party. But, in this paper, he would not be called a 'defector'. No punishment has been provided for people like him in the anti-defection law recently passed by the Parliament.

This account is not to suggest that there was no defection in Indian politics before the 1967 General Elections. Floor-crossing was already there, but in a very small form. What happened in late 1960s was quite different both in quality and quantity. There occurred a dramatic increase in the number of defections, and some of them changed sides several times in a short time. Little respect was paid to party ideology and programmes. The motive became glaringly materialistic day by day. Prospect of ministership and similar other temptations lured away many legislators from their parties. In course of time defection became a normal

things in India's political life.

Typology

At a theoretical level, defections may be divided into the following categories. First, these may be of two types, namely *principled* and *unprincipled*. While only a few defectors belong to the first category, most others belong to the second category. In Orissa, defections are generally unprincipled. Hardly has a defector left his party due to principled differences with its bosses. Defections may also be divided into two other types, namely, *individual* and *group*. Sometimes legislators leave their party (or parties) individually alone and on the basis of the calculation of individual profit by defection. Some other time they leave their political party (or parties) in a group. This happens generally when a prominent leader of the party defects. He takes with him a large number of followers—both legislators and others including party officials and workers. On several occasions groups consisting of more than 10 MLAs have defected. On the basis of whether a defector joins another party or seeks to separate identity, defections may be classified into two groups. The former may be described as *self-effacing*. By joining another party they allow their political originality and independence to die. On the other hand, some times, defections proceed to form a new political party which would help them in maintaining their political independence and identity. Group defectors generally have this tendency. The best examples are the formation of Jana Congress and that of Utkal Congress.

Major Defection Actors and Events

Defections in Orissa go back to pre-independence days, although there were only a few defectors in those days. Some Congress legislators left the party to form a non-Congress government in 1941.

In the 1952 Assembly and 1957 Assembly there took place 14 and 19 defections while in the 1961 Assembly there were 26 defections.[2] However, to be more specific, from 1952 to 1965, there were no large-scale defections. A large part of defections

that occurred during this period was primarily between the Congress and the Ganatantra Parishad. Some legislators left Ganatantra Parishad to join the Congress, while some others defected from the Congress to the Ganatantra Parishad. Many Independent MLAs defected to join either the Congress or the GP the two dominant parties of that period. There were a few instances of defections from Left parties. The largest number of group defections that took place then was five. In the 1957 Assembly 5 Congress MLAs defected to the GP while 5 GP MLAs changed over to the Congress.

In the history of defection of Orissa, the year 1966 is very significant, In that year an influential group of Congress MLAs led by H. K. Mahatab, an ex-Chief Minister, an ex-Cabinet Minister at the Centre and an ex-Governor, left the party and formed a new political party which they named as the Jana Congress.[3] It was a sort of small-scale party split. Although the number of defectors was not very large, its impact upon the state politics was momentous. A disproportionately large number of Congress rank and file followed them. The Mahtab group-defection which was a result of growing factionalism in the state Congress largely contributed to the debacle of the Congress in the 1967 Assembly election. The Jana Congress and Swatantra formed a coalition government in that year which lasted till the beginning of 1971.

Another important year in the history of defections in Orissa is 1970. In the 1967 Assembly election, Congress could win only 31 seats and was forced to remain in opposition. But the state party, after some time, was plagued by group in-fighting. The majority faction, led by Biju Patnaik, fell out of the grace of the High Command which encouraged the minority faction. As a result, after repeated rebuffs by the High Command. Biju with his large contingent of supporters including the majority of Congress MLAs left the party and formed a regional party called Utkal Congress.[4] Out of 31 Congress MLAs, as many as 24 defected and 17 of the latter joined Utkal Congress. Biju seldom claimed that his party was ideologically different from the Congress, although Utkal Congress laid more stress on the regional interests of Orissa. Mahtab, with some of his Jana Congress followers, came back to Congress after the defection of the Biju group.

Utkal Congress, in 1971 Assembly election, secured 32 seats and formed a coalition government with Swatantra. Biswanath Das, an 'outsider' was chosen as the Chief Minister. From the beginning Biju made efforts to become the Chief Minister and he intensified his effort he won a bye-election to the Assembly in 1972. But he failed in this regard. Once he was convinced that he would not be allowed to head the coalition government, he established secret links with the Congress and prepared ground for going back to the Congress along with his supporters. His party withdrew support from the government leading to its premature end in June 1972. All the Utkal Congress MLAs wanted to rejoin the Congress. But the latter admitted only 28 of them; Five others who were not allowed to enter Congress included Biju Patnaik, the leader of the group. Still what happened then was the largest defection in Orissa involving 28 MLAs. Just Before this 10 Swatantra MLAs led by Gangadhar Pradhan had shifted their loyalty to the Congress. Further, the Congress had also gained by the defection of 4 Utkal PSP MLAs to it in May 1972. These four including S. N. Dwivedi and Banka Bihari Das, two stalwarts of Orissa Politics, decided to wind up the party and join the Congress.

As per understanding already reached, some of the Utkal Congress defectors were rewarded with ministerial posts. But that was not enough to keep the defectors content and silent. As it became gradually clear that Congress leaders like Nandini Satapathy were not interested in taking back Biju Patnaik, 25 MLAs including Nilamani Routray left Congress and came back to Biju, their leader. The result was the fall of the first Nandini ministry in March 1973.

Since 1974 there has been a considerable decline in the rate of defection. However, one trend of defection seems to have been evident during this period : *Power has largely gravitated the defectors*. The second Nandini Ministry gradually increased its supporters' strength in the Assembly as a result of defection. But as the party's image was greatly tarnished during the emergency and as its fall became imminent, many Congress people including some Congress MLAs tried to switch over to the Janata. One notable example was Nandini Satapathy, the emergency-time Chief Minister, of Orissa who left Congress and joined the

Janata. She was elected to the Orissa Assembly in 1977 from Dhenkanal on the Janata ticket. Similarly, after the Janata was routed in the 1979 Lok Sabha poll, the party in Orissa was bitterly demoralised. Many Janata people deserted it and tried to enter the Congress. A few MLAs from other parties also defected to Congress. Prominent among them was Saurindri Nayak who defected from Congress (U) to Congress. After the resouding victory of the Congress in the Assembly election of 1980, all 4 Independent MLAs defected to Congress. Further Brindaban Nayak who had been elected on the Lok Dal ticket left the party on 4 July 1980 and declared himself as an independent MLA. However, this was his strategy to prepare the field for his entry to Congress at a later stage.

Table – 1. Defections in 1952 Assembly[5].

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of Defections	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress	68	1	CPI	1
2.	G. Parishad	31	4	XSP	1
3.	Socialist	10	1	CPI	1
4.	CPI	7	1	Congress	1
5.	Independent	23	6	GP	3
				Congress	3
6.	KMPP	—	—	—	
7.	Forward Block	1	1	PSP	1
	Total	140			

Table – 2. Defections in 1957 Assembly.

Sl. No,	Party	Seats won	No. of defections	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress	56	8	GP	5
				Swatantra	1
				Independent	2
2.	GP	51	5	Congress	5
3.	CPI	9	1	Congress	1
4.	PSP	11	—	—	
5.	Independent	13	4	Congress	4
	Total	140			

Table—3. Defections in 1961 Assembly.

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of defections	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress	82	12	Jana Congress	11
				Independent	1
2.	GP	36	8	Congress	5
				Independent	3
3.	CPI	4	—		
4.	PSP	10	2	Congress	2
				PSP	1
				Swatantra	1
	Total	140			

Table—4. Defections in 1967 Assembly.[5]

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of defections	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress	31	24	UC	17
				Cong. (O)	3
				Swatantra	2
				JC	1
				Independent	1
2.	Swatantra	49	2	Progressive	2
3.	Jana Congress	26	7	UC	4
				Progressive	2
				Independent	1
4.	PSP	21	—		
5.	CPI	7	—		
6.	CPI (M)	1	—		
7.	SSP	2	—		
8.	Independent	3	1	JC	1
	Total	140			

Conclusions

The above account suggests the following :

1. Defections are seldom caused by idealism. Self-interest the interest of the individual legislator concerned or the interest of the group to which he belongs—is the main motive of defectors

Table 5 Defections in 1971 Assembly.

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of defections	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress	51	30	Pragati	25
				Ind. block (subsequently re-joined Congress)	5
2.	Utkal Congress	34	32	Congress	28
3.	Congress (S)	1	1	Congress	1
4.	JC	1	—		
5.	Swatantra	36	11	Congress	11
6.	PSP	4	—		
7.	CPI	4	—		
8.	Jharkhand	4	4	Congress	4
9.	CPI (M)	2	—		
10.	Independent	4	1	Congress	1
	Total	139			

Table—6. Defections in 1974 Assembly.

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of defections	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress	69	3	Janata	1
				CFD	1
				Cong. (N)	1
2.	Utkal Congress	35	6	Congress	2
				Independent	4
3.	JC	1	1	Congress (O)	1
4.	Swatantra	21	1	Congress	1
5.	SPI	2			
6.	CPI	7	—		
7.	CPI (M)	3	—		
8.	Independent	8	4	Congress	4
	Total	146			

although they invariably claim that they change their party due to their differences with party bosses on questions of principles.

2. Material allurements causing defection include the post of minister, other important posts in governmental or semi govern-

Table—7. Defections in 1977 Aassembly.

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of defectors	Party to which defected	
1.	Janata	110	2	Independent	2
2.	Congress	26	3	Congress I	2
				Lok Dal	1
3.	CPI (M)	1	—		
4.	CPI	1	—		
5.	Independent	9	2	Janata	1
	Total	147			

Table 8. Defections in the 1980 Assembly.

Sl. No.	Party	Seats won	No. of defectors	Party to which defected	
1.	Congress I	122	—	—	
2.	Janata (JP)	3	—	—	
3.	Janata (S)	12	1	Independent	1
4.	CPI	4	—	—	
5.	Congress U	2	—	—	
6.	Independent	4	4	Congress (I)	4
	Total	147			

mental setups and money. While important defectors are generally rewarded with ministerial berths, the less important ones remain content with other prizes.

3. Corruption has crept into Indian politics in a big way. In course of time it has tended to increase manifold. It has come to such a pass that development and corruption are said to be living in peaceful and happy coexistence. Defection needs to be considered in this context of development-corruption syndrome. Defection is a manifestation of political corruption which is very difficult to root out so long as the present political structure remains fundamentally undisturbed.

Defectors are corrupt. But this does not mean that those who do not defect are free of corruption. In fact, it is possible that they are as corrupt as defectors. Legislators, at the times of governmental crises, are offered different types of high temptations to stay with their parent party. On such occasions the ministries are often reconstituted/expanded to drop a few dissidents and/or

to include a few loyalists. No government would accept its collapse caused by internal rebellion and defection without putting up a fight to counter and contain it. Once the defection drama starts, it is generally the highest bidder who wins. Whichever party or groups can offer more bribe can gain greater legislative support.

4. State politics is, to a great extent, affected by what happens at the centre. No wonder, defection politics of Orissa is partly influenced by national politics. The weakness and political uncertainty at the centre seem to encourage floorcrossing in states. For example, in the early years of her Prime ministership, Mrs Gandhi appeared to be vacillating and weak. That encouraged the growth of factionalism in Orissa Congress. This ultimately led to the defection of Mahtab group from Congress. Similarly, the split of Congress in 1969 was a factor of group fighting and defection in Orissa. The Biju faction, which incurred the anger of Mrs Gandhi, had to leave the party in 1970.

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5. Assembly-wise Tables on defections have been taken from B. K. Patnaik, n. 2.

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COALITION POLITICS IN ORISSA

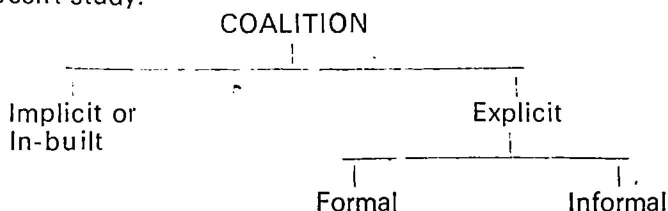
B. B. Jena
J. K. Baral

Multi-party systems are conducive to the growth of coalitions. If there are more than two parties with more or less equal strength, no party will be able to win absolute majority in elections. As a result, several parties, in their perceived interests enter into coalitions with a view to forming a government. A multi-party system is often characterised by political instability and political uncertainty. No surprise, coalitional politics is often accompanied by elements of unpredictability, instability, surprise and shock. However, if a multi-party system also happens to be a one dominant-party system, it is rarely visited by the phenomena of coalitional politics.[1]

In India, coalitions are seldom formed on the basis of ideology. It is not uncommon that political parties with opposite ideologies and programmes enter into coalitions. Generally the guiding principle in the formation of coalitions is convenience and opportunism. Capturing power rather than any other ideal is the real motive, though the latter is often cited by the coalescing parties as the causal factor.

In the present study we have used the term 'coalition' in its broad sense. Gamson has said that in mixed-motive situations involving at least three units, coalition is formed between the two who think that they would gain by it and that they stand to lose if they act otherwise.[2] This definition would generally apply to governmental coalitions - coalitions formed by several political parties to form a government to gain advantage at the cost of other political parties who stay in opposition. Although this view of coalition would get maximum attention from us, we would also throw light on another type of coalition which is intra-political party and not inter-political party in nature. Here we have in mind the predominantly socio-economic groups with different values and goals who join hands to form a political party

or who join an existing party with the hope that this decision would help them in attaining some short-term/less vital objectives. Such coalitions are expected to gradually mitigate the elements of cleavage and conflict and encourage the building of consensus and cooperation in the society. It is just possible that the coalescing units would gradually realise that staying together was beneficial to them and might help them in getting more and better quality benefits. Such realisation is likely to prompt the constituent units to give up their initial autonomous characters and move towards giving a permanent institutional shape to their coalition.[3] We have termed this coalition as implicit or in-built coalition. These coalitions are intra-political party in nature. But like inter-political party coalitions, these are also characterised by bargaining, compromise, and consensus, though in a less pronounced way than the former. By explicit coalitions we mean those coalitions which are formed by political parties in a multi-party system to share power at the expense of other (s). These may by divided into two types, namely, formal and informal. For example, the Swatantra-Jana Congress government in Orissa was a formal coalition while the Mahtab ministry from 1957 to 1959 was an informal coalition. In 1957 assembly election, the Congress failed to win absolute majority. But Mahtab was allowed to form a minority government with the support of the CPI and Jharkhand MLAs, although the latter did not join the government. The second Nandini government which came to office on 6 March 1974 was another example of informal coalition. It was buttressed by the informal but explicit support of seven CPI MLAs and three Independents. Both governments, put into office by informal coalition, had to allegedly pay a lot of money to the informal partner (s), and to oblige them in several other ways. Each time the Assembly met, the latter demanded a big price. The following diagram illustrates the typology of coalitions used in the present study.



In-built Coalition

In India, Congress is the dominant political party. Except a brief interregnum (1977-1979) during which the Janata ruled at the centre, it is the Congress which has always been in power at the centre since Independence and much more than any other party it has been ruling over most of the states most of the time. It is a huge organisation with strong and wide-spread grass-root support which is as much a function of its legacy of the freedom struggle as that of power-patronage politics. Because of its long tenure in office at different levels—local, state and centre—, it has been able to attract various sections of the population with different and, at times, clashing values, beliefs and interests. Congress is an "umbrella party" under which all these people—big and small, rich and poor, elites and common people, high castes and low castes, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians—have grouped together and they have seldom deserted it in large numbers. In other words, Congress has been a *'coalition party'* consisting of several groups and sub-groups which, in their perceived common interests, have agreed to stay together as alliance-partners. It is worth-noting that all these constituent groups and sub-groups are themselves coalitional in composition; they consist of members with different socio-economic backgrounds and orientations; the only common tie binding them together is their motive to dominate the party at the cost of other groups and sub-groups belonging to it.

This coalitional nature of the Congress Party pervades not only at the central level, but also at the state and local levels. The state units and the below-state units of the party are coalitions of different groups and sub-groups. Briefly speaking, the Congress party has always been characterised—even during the freedom struggle—by groupism and factional conflicts. It contains within it factions and pressure groups which co-exist because they think that leaving the party would harm them. But when they feel for certain that defection would be profitable, they tend to leave it, thus subjecting the in-built and implicit coalition of the party to a great deal of strain. Such things, though not common, have taken place at all levels—central, state and local. The Congress split of 1969 was of this type. So were the formation of Jana

Congress and that of Utkal Congrass in Orissa in 1966 and in 1970 respectively. It is worth-noting that these splits in the party do not bring to an end the implicit coalition in it. When one faction leaves the party, the rival faction becomes all dominant within it. But this process lasts only for a short time. Soon after that, as if it is an inevitable feature of the Congress Party, a new faction grows restoring the balance within the party and making it again a coalitional party. When the Mahtab group left Congress in mid-1960s, the Biju faction became all-powerful without any internal challenge. But by 1970 a new faction consisting of Nandini Satapathy, Binayak Acharya and their supporters had raised its head and before long it emerged as the dominant faction forcing the Biju group to leave the party. The Nandini faction dominated the party till 1976 when the anti-Nandini elements led by Binayak Acharya and Janaki Ballav Patnaik successfully challenged it.[1] Since 1980 the Congress party of Orissa has been a coalition of mainly two factions--the dominant faction headed by J. B. Patnaik and the subordinate faction led by Kahnu Lenka. R. C. Rath, an ex-Minister of State at the Centre, who for some time led the anti-Janaki faction left the party on the eve of the 1984 Lok Sabha election.

Congress is not the only party in the state to have in-built coalitional propensity. This is perhaps, with varying degrees, true of many parties in the state. In general, it may be said that left parties have less of such propensity than non-Left parties. For example, the Janata Party of Orissa is a coalition of Biju Patnaik group and Rabi Roy group. While the latter comprises some old socialist elements, the former is dominated by some ex-Congress leaders. The two groups greatly differ from each other in regard to their ideologies, but they have stayed within the same party for last several years because of their common desire to defect from the Congress. It is thus apparent that political parties, whose ideological discipline is not very strong, are prone to have in-built coalitional balance.

Formal Coalitions : Formation

Between 1952, the year in which the first general election was held, and 1986 only thrice have coalition governments been formed

in the state.[5] The first coalition government was formed in 1959. The second coalition government came into existence in 1967 and the third came into being in 1971. While the first comprised the Congress Party and the Ganatantra Parishad, the second consisted of the Swatantra and the Jana Congress and the third was constituted by the Utkal Congress, the Swatantra and the Jharkhand.

H. K. Mahtab, who was the Governor of Bombay for one year (1955-56), did not feel comfortable there. He wanted to come back to the active politics of Orissa. By using his political lieutenants—Biju Patnaik, Biren Mitra and Nilamani Routray—he managed to force Naba Krishna Choudhury to resign from the post of Chief Minister and leave politics virtually permanently. After regaining the Chief Ministership of Orissa, Mahtab was faced with a serious difficulty. For some time he ran a minority government with the backing of the CPI, Jharkhand and a few Independent members of the Assembly. But the latter exacted heavy price from him for their support. As, in course of time, the amount of this price increased, Mahtab tried to find out an alternative for running the government. He sent feelers to the Maharaja of Patna, R. N. Singh Deo, the leader of the Ganatantra Parishad in the Assembly, suggesting the formation of a coalition government between the two parties. The Maharaja, despite some opposition from P. K. Deo, the Maharaja of Kalahandi, accepted the offer. He might have thought that power-sharing with Congress would improve the status of his party, particularly in the coastal belt where his party was very weak. Thus came into being the Congress-Ganatantra Parishad coalition government. There was ideological difference between them. The GP was a rightist party, dominated by feudal lords like ex-Maharajas and ex-Zamindars. On the other hand, the Congress was a centrist party which proclaimed socialism as its objective and whose leaders were mostly drawn from the middle class although there were some ex-Maharajas and ex-Zamindars in it. Thus the Mahtab-Singh Deo coalition was a meeting of convenience. It was based upon the common motive of both leaders and their followers to remain in power though each of them was the main political rival of the other. It was a rare coalition. *Such coalitions between the two dominant parties of a state are seldom formed.*

The Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition government of 1967

is the only example in Orissa which was the result of the electoral alliance between the two partners in that year. The Jana Congress led by Mahtab entered into an electoral alliance with Singh Deo's Swatantra and they jointly fought the election on the basis of a 22-point programme against their common enemy—the Congress. The alliance won a massive victory and formed a coalition government under the leadership of Singh Deo who was the leader of the majority party. Mahtab did not join the cabinet; perhaps it would have been embarassing for him to serve under Singh Deo who was a member of his cabinet in the Congress-Parishad coalition. As a result, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, the next important leader of Jana Congress, occupied the number two berth in the cabinet—the post of Deputy Chief Minister.

In 1971 Assembly election, no party was able to win absolute majority. However, the Utkal Congress, the Swatantra and Jharkhand chose to from a coalition government. In the past, Singh Deo, the leader of Swatantra, and Biju Patnaik, the leader of UC, were bitter enemies of each other. But in changed circumstances in 1971 they did not hesitate to join hands against the Congress which had welcomed Mahtab—their common enemy—by that time. Their aim was to prevent him from heading a Congress government in the state. The political situation in the state in the aftermath of the election was quite fluid. As each of the three major parties.. the Congress, the Utkal Congress and the Swatantra.. had won a sizeable number of seats, it was possible for any two of them to form a coalition government. (They had won 51, 32 and 36 seats respectively). However, each one had some constraints, though of varying degrees, in joining hands with another. The relation between Singh Deo and Mahtab was then very strained. In fact, the Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition collapsed because of intensified enmity between them. It was, therefore, not easy for them to bury their hatchets so soon and rebuild political friendship. The possibility of a Congress-Utkal Congress coalition was slim because the leaders of the former who must have had some inferiority complex *vis-a-vis* Biju Patnaik were deadly opposed to his return to the party through such a coalition. The last possibility—a coalition between the Swatantra and the Utkal Congress—was more logical than the other two. Both parties, in the context of Indian

politics, belonged to the opposition; and a coalition between two opposition parties was more credible and sellable than a coalition between the 'Ruling' party—the Congress—and an opposition party. Further, the political enmity between Singh Deo and Biju was less recent than the same between Singh Deo and Mahtab. Under the circumstance, the one which was logical prevailed; the Swatantra and the Utkal Congress decided to form a coalition government. However, the last bottleneck for this was the post of Chief Minister. Which party would it go to ? Would Singh Deo or Biju Patnaik become the Chief Minister ? Both were aspirants for the post. But Singh Deo had perhaps better claim than Biju for this due to the following two factors. First, Swatantra had secured more seats (36) than the Utkal Congress (32). Secondly, Biju Patnaik who, had contested from several Assembly constituencies failed to win even one seat whereas Singh Deo was an elected member. However, Biju was not prepared to understand this logic. This created for some time a political stalemate which was removed only when both sides agreed to accept an outsider, as the Chief Minister. The man chosen as the Chief Minister was Biswanath Das who was once the 'Prime Minister' of the state in late 1930s (1937-1939) and who was the Governor of Uttar Pradesh for one term (1962-1967). Das was elected to the Assembly after a few months in a bye-election held in Rourkela Constituency.

Conflict Resolution

From time to time the coalition governments were faced with different types of conflicts, though ideological conflicts were rare. These conflicts generally related to questions like the transfer of government officials, opening of schools and dispensaries, starting other developmental works, issuing licenses and dealer-ships, awarding works to contractors and others. Exercise of power and distribution of spoils were mostly at the root of conflicts among coalition partners. These conflicts, in general, could be resolved without much difficulty through accepted mechanisms. But when some of these were mixed up with the clash of vital interests of major actors of coalescing partners, these proved to be intractable and fatal for the coalition.

The Mahtab-Singh Deo coalition had two conflict-resolution mechanisms. One was the informal meeting between the two leaders from time to time to sort out divisive issues. At times, P. K. Deo, if he was present at Bhubaneswar, was associated with these meetings. Second was the "unofficial cabinet" which consisted of all the members of the cabinet. It met one day before the official meeting of the cabinet. There was frank discussion after which compromises were reached. As a result, the Cabinet was hardly faced with any serious conflict.

Singh Deo who headed the Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition government had gained valuable experience about the functioning of a coalition ministry during the previous coalition government with Mahtab as the Chief Minister. Singh Deo ministry was more methodical than its predecessor in regard to conflict resolution. It mainly instituted two committees to deal with the conflicts that the government encountered from time to time. One of them was the coordination committee which consisted of almost all the important leaders of the coalescing parties. It met informally as and when it was felt necessary to press the committee into service. The discussion was informal and was not recorded. Efforts were made to reach a compromise on divisive issues. The Singh Deo ministry also appointed some Experts Committees whose findings were binding to it. Two important examples of this sort were the Students' Unrest Committee and the Natural Calamity Committee.

The Das ministry retained the co-ordination committee of the ministry. However, one improvisation in respect of conflict resolution that it effected was the informal meeting among the Chief Minister, Singh Deo, the leader of the Swatantra and Biju Patnaik, the leader of the Utkal Congress who was elected to the Assembly in a bye-election from Rajnagar in September 1971. Most of the important issues were thrashed out during the meeting of these three leaders. As a result, the coordination committee did not have to spend much energy in settling disputes between partners. The possibility of any serious conflict in the coalition was further minimised by the agreement between the partners not to interfere in each other's domain. Neither side raised serious questions about a portfolio allotted to the other. However, there arose a few questions which were potentially destructive. For

example, the issue of privy purse seriously divided the two major partners of the coalition. This involved their respective ideological positions which opposed each other. But an imminent threat to the coalition was averted when both sides agreed to disagree as the future of the government did not depend upon the fate of the Privy Purse Abolition Bill in the Orissa Legislative Assembly. The Government's policy on Kendu leaves was intensely disliked by the Utkal Congress. But the latter did not strongly oppose it as the question came under the jurisdiction of the Swatantra Party. (The Forest Minister, Aintha Sahu, belonged to the Swatantra Party).

Fall of Coalition Governments

None of the three coalition governments fell due to any serious ideological or programmatic rift among the partners. On the other hand, there was a common pattern evident in the collapse of all three. The fall of each could be attributed to the power play either between the constituent partners or within a coalescing party. The Mahtab-Singh Deo Coalition fell because Mahtab failed to contain the factional challenge within his party to the coalition. His failure to satisfy some of his erstwhile lieutenants, particularly Biju Patnaik, cost the coalition very much. It is the Patnaik group which successfully persuaded the Congress High Command to order Mahtab to break the coalition. It is important to note that there was good rapport between the two leaders of the coalescing parties. Neither Mahtab nor Singh Deo was interested in breaking the government. It was the dissatisfaction and revolt of an 'outsider' who was not a member of the cabinet that brought down the coalition. But, by himself, he could not have probably succeeded in wrecking it. The final blow was dealt by the Congress High Command. Thus the fate of this coalition largely depended upon the will—may be, whims—of the party leadership of one partner outside the state

The Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition was wrecked again by an 'outsider' — H. K. Mahtab who, though a Jana Congress member in the Assembly, was not a member of the cabinet. However, he was the most important leader of Jana Congress, and he controlled the party's activities as a partner of the coali-

tion government from outside. He lent his support to the government so long as they felt that his voice was counting and his interest was safeguarded. He tried to pull it down the moment he saw that the continuance of the government spelt a great danger to himself. His political life was threatened by the decision of the government to start a full-fledged inquiry against him in pursuance of the recommendation of the Mudholkar Report. The conflict between the two partners over the Kendu-leaves rebate issue was intensified by the already-aroused hostility of Mahtab to the coalition government due to his anger over the Mudholkar Report. He almost forced his party supporters to withdraw support from the coalition government. Though Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, a Jana Congress leader and the Deputy Chief Minister, was not in favour of breaking the coalition, he could not gather sufficient courage to oppose him. This led to the unexpected death of the Swatantra-Jana Congress coalition government which, however, had the distinction of having the longest longevity of the three formal coalitions so far formed in the state.

The fall of the Biswanath Das ministry was caused apparently by the defection of Utkal Congress members to the Congress. But that was the symptom of the disease. The real cause of the demise of the coalition government was the irrepressible desire of Biju Patnaik to become the Chief Minister. Just after the Assembly elections of 1971 he wanted to occupy this post. But he failed in his bid to do this due to the resistance of the Swatantra Party. But after he won a bye-election to the Assembly, he became impatient to replace Das as the Chief Minister. But the latter was not prepared to oblige him. Nor was Singh Deo willing to help him in this direction. Having seen no hope to get back the coveted post of Chief Minister which he had given up in 1963 under the Kamraj Plan, he engineered the defection of his party MLAs to the Congress Party. This led to the fall of the coalition government headed by Das. The coalition died not because of any ideological or issue-oriented rift within it, but due to the power-related desires and moves of major actors of different constituent parties.

The above account regarding the fall of coalition governments suggests two things. First, it was always a 'Congressman'

(past or present) who engineered the break-up of the government. On two occasions it was Biju Patnaik who did it. On the other occasion, Mahtab played the villain's role. At no time did Singh Deo, the other major actor in the coalition dramas of Orissa, try to pull down a coalition government. Secondly, the coalescing party which had the option of capturing power immediately or after some time even after breaking the government did it when it felt that the coalition government was no longer profitable for it. On the other hand, the constituent party which did not enjoy such leverage tended to almost cling to the government. In case of each coalition government, Singh Deo's party (GP/ Swatantra) did not have good prospects of regaining power if the government broke-up. Therefore, whenever the latter was gripped with a major crisis threatening its collapse, the former tried hard to defuse the crisis and keep the coalition alive.

Conclusion

The big political happenings which occurred in different Indian states in mid 1960s raised hopes of sharp polarization of political forces and making coalition an important feature of Indian politics. It was also hoped that coalitional politics represented an alternative model of political development in the country and that one dominant party model had finally been replaced by the coalitional model. These expectations have, to a large extent, been belied. Political forces in the country are hardly more polarized today than they were in the past. Neither at the centre nor in states has coalition become a dominant pattern of politics. The Congress-led coalition in Kerala has most of the time been a fragile structure, and the Left-front coalition in West Bengal has not been free of occasional strains although such strains have seldom threatened to break it.

In Orissa the picture, in so far as coalitional politics is concerned, is not much different from the above all-India pattern. The Janata wave of 1977 seemed to signal the polarization of political forces. But within a short period, that signal dimmed and the state was thrown back in to the midst of political fragmentation accompanied by one-dominant party system. Rajiv is going strong at the Centre and despite occasional spe-

culations to the contrary, there is not apparently any serious danger to the Congress rule in Orissa with J. B. Patnaik at the helm of affairs.

Since 1977 Orissa has practically been a two-party system—both parties being centrists. While most of the rightist elements have joined these two, there has taken place little improvement in the position of Left Parties which were never strong. Between 1967 and 1977, Orissa had three major political parties making it resemble a multi-polar model. This multipolarity which vanished in 1977 is unlikely to reappear in the politics of the state in the near future. The minor parties like the CPI, CPI (M), BJP and Jagrat Orissa are too weak to pose any danger to the Congress supremacy in state politics. Thus there is little possibility of the state going back under the rule of a coalition government in the near future.

In general, the people of Orissa have been betrayed by their leaders. They have become so corrupt and self-centred that they have seriously neglected the interests of the people. However, it is generally during one-party government—especially that of Congress—that a few steps towards major development have been taken in Orissa. No important developmental measure has been taken by any coalition government. The Maharaja of Patna whose coalition government lasted for nearly 5 long years was perhaps not corrupt; he was probably a skilled administrator. But even during his regime no big step was taken for developing the state—especially in the industrial field. The failure of coalition governments in this front was partly due to the fact that the coalescing parties wasted a lot of their time and energy in resolving their differences. Another factor which was responsible for this was that the last two coalition governments were purely non-Congress in composition. As a result, they failed to receive adequate support and assistance from the centre where the Congress was in power.

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22

PRESS AND POLITICS IN ORISSA

Chintamoni Mohapatra

The press in Orissa began as a tool for religious propaganda by Christian missonaries in 1850s. The missionary journals also carried news items which served to impress on the minds of the people the authority of the British Raj.

Indigenous intellectuals took to the printing press to review ancient Oriya literature and later brought out journals to ventilate the grievances of the people who were not only economically backward but had also lost their political homogeneity, and were fast losing their cultural identity.

The Oriya-speaking areas were then divided and tagged to the neighbouring provinces of Bengal, Central Provinces and Madras. The earliest task of the indigenous press therefore was to preserve Oriya language against the onslaught of Bengali, Hindi and Telugu languages and to bring about a political union of Oriya-speaking areas and foster economic development. Language indeed was the main hub of politics of those days and prominent journalists like Gouri Shankar Ray of the *Utkal Deepika*, Cuttack, Fakir Mohan Senapati of the *Sambada Bahika* of Balasore and Nilamani Vidyaratna of the *Sambalpur Hiteishini* tried very hard through their journals and otherwise to defend and preserve Oriya language. The British officials in Orissa, however, earned the good will of Oriya intellectuals because of their support to Oriya language.

Vidyaratna, the first professional editor in Oriya journalism formed the Ganjam Union to bring together the Oriya-speaking people of Ganjam district and on the model of this, the Utkal Union or Utkal Sammilani was formed to struggle for the unification of Oriyas. A number of journalists-statesmen including Shashi Bhusan Rath, Pandit Utkalmoni Gopabandhu Das and others led by Utkala Gourab Madhusudan Das worked for the Union.

It was politics which inspired the lithographed *Gandhi Sama-*

char, the first, though short-lived, Oriya daily brought out by Niranjan Patnaik during the visit of Mahatma Gandhi to Orissa to inform the people about his programmes and activities, for about a couple of months.

Shashi Bhusan Rath, the pioneer editor who brought out the first printed Oriya daily, the *Dainik Asha*, utilised it to fight for the cause of the Oriyas and being convinced that an English organ is necessary to mobilise the support outside, he brought out the first English daily in Orissa, the New Orissa, inspite of severe financial hardship. He was hesitant even earlier to work fully for the Congress party of which he was a member, as the party was not supporting the demand of Oriyas initially for a separate state. The party had to change the stand as a result of pressure brought upon it by the leader-journalists. The dream of a separate state of Orissa was realised in 1936. Rath's papers which were financially in the red shifted to Cuttack in lure of government advertisements but became unpopular because of their support of war efforts of the British Raj and went out of existence after the death of Rath and after changing hands.

It was Gopabandhu Das who went the whole hog to make the Oriyas join the political mainstream of the country. He gave full support to the Congress movement through his weekly paper, the *Samaj* which was later converted to a daily. He was arrested because of an editorial comment captioned 'Serious if True' on a news item alleging police high-handedness which was later found to be not true. Das was finally acquitted. He could not be apprehended on a second occasion as death preferred to intervene. The *Samaj* had to stop publishing for a time because of the actions of the British regime. That however, earned, for it popularity to make it the leading paper in the State.

It would appear that by 1920s and 1930s, all-India political movement was making inroads into Orissan journalism, and after the formation of Orissa and even shortly before that, it began to exercise a great impact in the State. As in other parts of the country, journalism had been taken up during this period as a necessary part of a political mission and many a young man without completing his education, joined it. In fact, one of them, Sriharsha Mishra, who later became the editor of leading dailies, could not complete even his school education.

In Free India

The situation took a significant turn in independent India. The papers which had found it necessary or expedient to blame the British rulers for all the evils, had to find new targets from among the indigenous leaders. Politics became a greater obsession than before because of two factors. Thanks to the vociferous multi-party leaders most of the issues were politicalised. Secondly, the politicians, the erstwhile patriotic political workers, found the newspapers to be a desirable tool to propagate their line of thinking and to muster support for their cause.

Thus the weekly *Prajatantra*, founded by Harekrushna Mahtab, which was critical of feudal rulers and the British regime and had its press in Balasore locked up, was revived as a daily in Cuttack. It was stated that the daily was considered necessary as the Samaj did not give unstinted support to the merger of feudal states with Orissa and to such projects as the Hirakud Dam. Although *The Prajatantra* is managed by a trust, the Prajatantra Prachar Samity, it came to reflect the thoughts and policies of its founder and experienced ups and downs along with the rise and fall of his political standing and support.

The Matrubhumi, another daily started after independence, had no political affiliation as such and did challenge mighty political influences in the State successfully. Later it was allegedly helped by politicians of different hues in furtherance of their ends. At another time its editor was a candidate for election on behalf of the ruling party.

The feudal rulers who did not have an organ of their own, brought out *The Ganatantra* from Cuttack to express their views and when that paper ran into a labour dispute, was made to close down. Another daily, *The Swarajya*, from Bhubaneswar was brought out. The paper which gave greater prominence to news from the feudal States, supported the political line of *The Swatantra* Party in Orissa, which centred round the former rulers and had a distinct economic and political philosophy.

Party politics in India has a way of growing around some influential personality and not on the basis of some socio-economic issues later show schisms and form factions around personalities which leapfrog from one party or group to another with their

allies and supporters. Thus Biju Patnaik who grew under Mahtab's leadership found an occasion to rebel and charted out his own course and style of functioning as the Chief Minister of Orissa. He too felt it necessary to have his newspaper and thus *The Kalinga* was born to last for about a decade. It flourished while Biju Patnaik was in power in Orissa and later folded its wings.

Similarly, Biren Mitra, who was Biju's ardent supporter, though it necessary to have his own voice, *The Janashakti*, which had a more leftist tilt and was thinking of bringing out an English daily. But his paper like his Chief Ministership was very transitory.

The death of these two newspapers however did not deter Nandini Satapathy from bringing out another daily, *The Dharitri*, from Bhubaneswar when she became the Chief Minister. The paper continues even after her removal from power with its earning affected but still with a measure of popularity. Another daily, *The Pragativadi* has been started recently by Pradyumna Kishore Bal, a Parliament member, while *The Dinalipi* started by group of youngmen including journalists has, political support.

The Prajatantra Prachar Samity also succeeded in bringing out another daily, *The Hirakhanda*, from Sambalpur where a former Minister Dr. Jhasaketan Sahu had brought out an English daily named *India My Nation*. In South Orissa, in Berhampur, Brundaban Naik, a former Minister revived *The Dainik Asha*, the oldest Oriya daily, which was first started by Sashi Bhusan Rath.

There are still some other dailies in the state not started by politicians but not very influential or prosperous. It could thus be asserted without exaggeration that most of the daily newspapers of Orissa are political in origin.

Two Effects

Such origin has two effects - managerial and qualitative. Two papers—*The Kalinga* and *The Janashakti* folded their wings after their founders were out of power or lost interest in them. Two others, *The Dharitri* and *The Swarajya* have reduced earnings although *The Dharitri* is better placed compared to many other papers. *The Prajatantra* at times finds itself in the red or on the verge of it.

At least one English daily, *The Eastern Times*, sponsored by the Prajatantra Prachar Samity had to close down, because it was badly managed as *The Samiti* did not give it due importance, laying more stress on the Oriya paper. *The Prajatantra*, which was considered more useful to reach the masses. The English paper meant for the elite therefore could be dispensed with when the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta decided to bring out an edition from Cuttack. The linotype machine of *The Eastern Times* were sold out to *The Patrika*—though the latter's move for a Cuttack edition was condemned editorially. The Samity however revived *The Eastern Times* as a weekly which went off and on several times. Nevertheless recently under the editorship of Jayanta Das it made a remarkable start in investigative journalism and some of its reports could be considered inconvenient to the Government. The Samiti decided to close it down, declaring its intention to resuscitate it as a daily.

The prosperity or otherwise of a paper in Orissa depends to a great extent on the Government advertisement as a single source. That perhaps explains how easily a paper could be started or closed down depending on official backing. Even a paper like *The Samaj* which attracts most of the non-official advertisements, was not too often critical of the Government, although of late a more critical trend is noticed. Its octogenarian editor was a minister in the Congress cabinet and represented a constituency in the State legislature for a long lime. It is now being run on behalf of the People's Society to which it has been handed over by Gopabandhu Das.

Quality

As regards the quality of journalism, the politically oriented papers have two aspects—beneficial and harmful. Their beneficial effects lay in bringing into focus the loopholes of the political adversaries who may be trying to misutilise their powers or mislead the people. It was most evident during the days when Messrs. Biju Patnaik and Biren Mitra were in power. They had their business interests while they were in the Government with whom they traded. Although the ruling Congress Party then had a record strength in the legislature and the opposition were

numerically not very strong, the papers kept on their fire and an enquiry Commission set up later pronounced the 'administrative impropriety' of Biju Patnaik. All these came out vociferously in the papers of Mahtab against whom both the leaders had rebelled earlier.

It has been noted that the papers did not stop at publishing merely the loopholes of the leaders. In a way they also encouraged the students' agitation during Mitra's Chief Ministership, many of the student leaders getting their moral and intellectual inspiration from the journals. The result was that while Biju Patnaik went out of the cabinet under Kamaraj Plan, Biren Mitra who refused to open fire on the students before the legislature, had to climb down from the *Goddi* and the Congress Ministry saw four Chief Ministers in the course of five years, what is more, there began a chain of enquiry commissions against at least three erstwhile Chief Ministers—Biju Patnaik, Mahtab and R.N. Singh Deo. The Commissions of course could not obliterate their political leadership, although for a while their names came under a cloud.

Similar briskness could be found in case of lapses during Nandini Satapathy's regime. While most of the papers, including those from outside the State, did not take much notice of the firing at Guddari near Parlakhemundi in pursuance of collection of levy paddy, *The Prajatantra* took up their cause both in its reports and editorials. No wonder that the Satapathy Government did not take kindly to Mahtab's paper ! Mahtab himself was interned during emergency.

Political motivation could also have a negative effect when most of the papers preferred silence when comment was called for. The occasion was provided when Mrs. Satapathy lost the favour of Mrs. Gandhi and would not court her son Sanjay Gandhi. An agitation was started to drive her out, although she was duly elected as the Chief Minister. And when she was shunted out, none of the local papers could have a word to say against the move, thanks to emergency, and perhaps apprehensive of their future under a new dispensation. This however did not prevent outside papers—notably *The Statesman*, in publishing fortnight comments. *The Prajatantra* considered the change as a good riddance to Mrs. Satapathy.

Issues Sidetracked

The dominance of politics has another undesirable effect. As in case of other newspapers in the country, it side-tracks other important issues or gives them a political colour. A case in point is the communal riot in Rourkela 1964 March 19 to 23. About 800 persons were estimated to have been killed, several hundred houses were damaged and property worth a few lakhs of rupees was looted.

There were correspondents of two Oriya papers-*The Samaj* and *The Prajatantra*-at that time in Rourkela. But their despatches, if there were any, mostly went unpublished. On the other hand, the offical handouts emanating from Bhubaneswar were published. This complete dependence on the government for the account of the riot might have helped the government in avoiding some embarassment. Such an attitude was perhaps inspired by a desire not to further worsen the situation by publishing unconfirmed reports and hearsays, as was explained by a journalist in a letter to the editor. But it kept the people in the dark and in effect could not fight rumours or misunderstanding which led to intensification of the riot. It was perhaps not considered necessary to send staffers to the affected areas. At least it was not on record that any of the newspapers sought Government help or permission to send its special representative to the spot to assess the situation. Mr. Biju Patnaik who went to Rourkela blamed foreign nationals of being involved in the trouble. It brought out a firm denial. Chief Minister Biren Mitra who visited the place after the riots, later blamed a P. S. P. leader for being involved in it and to buttress the charge brought out a letter of doubtful credibility. This and the arrest of an RSS leader caused a storm in Orissa Assembly and the newspaper took more notice of these political allegations and exchanges as usual.

Thus the papers seemed to conveniently forget about their demand to find out the conspirators in Orissa and Bihar who had inspired the riot and had egged on the Adivasis to kill the Muslims. Biju Patnaik had himself described that persons were instigating the people but shied away when Patnaik pointed him out. The papers seemed to be satisfied once a few officers were transferred or otherwise taken to task for the negligence of their

duties during the riot.

The State Government however did appoint a probe body which blamed the officials and the police who had a peculiar knack of often arriving at the affected spots after the killings had been done, their chief conveniently being in the control room. The report also said of iron rods used in the riot having been prepared at the steel plant at Roorkela. It was also noted that most of those killed belonged to the minority community, the death of a few of the majority community being only incidental. The report also pointed out the wrangling between the army and the civilians which helped worsen the situation.

But even till today the report of the one-man commission has not been published and the newspapers seem to have forgotten about it. Thus the culprits went scot-free and, may be went for still more green pastures elsewhere. It is to be noted that more often than not whenever a riot took place in the country, it was declared to have been engineered by some vested interests, very likely outsiders. But the newspapers in the country fail to pinpoint the guilty, except perhaps in a few recent cases. Thus the failure of Orissan newspapers in this respect is shared by others too.

During Elections

Politicising the newspapers was most in evidence during the election period. Some of the papers also indulged in roorbacks. Thus for instance, a report appeared in two dailies that Sarangadhar Das who was one of the pioneers of the State Peoples Movement had been won over by the feudal rulers. The report was pooh-poohed by the socialist leader Surendra Nath Dwivedi soon after, at a press conference.

The elections also prompted the newspapers to describe differently the success or otherwise of an election meeting. If one paper reported that meeting could not be held because of the howlers, the rival paper wanted the readers to believe that the meeting was a grand success, or if the report conceded some space to the disturbers, it stated that a handfulof youths failed to disturb the meeting. This distortion or suppression of truth in the newspapers during the election perhaps could be considered a fair game during the pre-poll time by the readers who knew the poli-

tical affiliation of the journals. This however instead of throwing light on facts merely served to confuse them.

Those journals which did not want to take sides had their sense of fairness extended to placing the reports of the meetings of rival parties side by side and upto the same length. This was in evidence atleast in *The Samaj* during the last general election. It could hardly be said fair from a sense of newsworthiness. But it had the usefulness of forestalling pressures from any of the rival parties.

On the other hand, the banes of our election practices such as manoeuvring the list of the names of the electorate, finding candidates on the basis of castes and communities, collection of money from the contractors or firms earlier favoured or with promises given, transfer of sums of money as a lure to the voters and free and wide distribution of liquor-these are either ignored or inadequately reported until late.

Economic Process Overlooked

When politics becomes the hub of journalistic activites, more significant economic processes are not likely to draw the notice of the newspapers. Agriculture which is the mainstay of Orissa had not been able to inspire special or separate treatment in the newspapers—though *The Prajatantra*, a pioneer in modern journalism, did run a regular column for 'Grama, Krushi O Krushaka for a period.

News pertaining to agriculture are mostly of the distress reporting' variety—the drought, the floods, lack of paddy or rice in the rural areas. But these do not focus on the change that is being brought about in the agricultural practices or environment. Any one coming to rural Orissa after a lapse of a decade, particularly to areas formerly covered by forests, would be surprised to find the denudation that has been going on with its inevitable consequence of soil erosion. This process has not attracted the newsmen's notice to the required degree. Similarly, though news of stealthy export of valuable timber do appear now and then, no serious efforts seem to be on foot to check the same. The Kendu leaf trade which saw the undoing of the Singh Deo ministry and was the bone of contention in several ministries is now almost

forgotten.

The much-publicised land ceiling seemed to be a greater political maneuvre than a suitable economic measure. Thus two to three acres of land given to a farm labourer for cultivation could hardly meet his needs. The result has been that such labourers continue to migrate from the villages in search of jobs to nearby or distant towns and cities. Nor is there any increase in production as a result of this. But there is scarcely any publicity of this outcome.

Not much publicity has been given either to the land consolidation measure from which much was expected in minimising the disputes in the villages and in augmenting production. But the measure already implemented in some parts of the state, it was reported by a weekly, has not led to increase in production. What could be the snag ? The newspapers have not investigated it so far.

The negligence of the economic aspect also involves a readiness to accept the official version. A case in point is the small Farmers Development Agency Scheme which was considered to be the most successful in Orissa in Ganjam district. This was never enquired into until the Department of Economics of Berhampur University took up the project for investigation. The department found out that although a lot of help had been given to small farmers, most of it was not properly utilised. It is the petty officials and others who had benefitted and not those for whom the scheme was meant.

What has been stated in respect of agriculture holds true also in respect of industry in which Orissa is backward. There are not enough indigenous industrial entrepreneurs and a few public sector industries have not been able to build up the proper industrial atmosphere to involve the educated. The ambition of an average educated young man in the state is to go for a job, in a preferably government or semi-government institution and not to run an industry.

It is the view of our economists that the public sector industries in Orissa, for example in Rourkela, have not been of a great benefit to the Orissans as the infrastructure had not been built up to train the required personnel in the state. These require not only constant watchfulness but also persistent strees on need-

based planning and generation of popular enthusiasm. Certainly by journalistic effort alone these problems cannot be solved. But the zeal with which the early journalists of the Orissa region had worked for the cultural identity of Oriyas and later for its political homogeneity is not noticeable now among the paper in the field of economic development. Politics seems to overshadow their activities affecting to some extent the vision.

Relation with Journalists

Politics has also led to victimisation of journalists. Thus for instance, the editor of *The Nainkhunta*, the very popular satirical magazine in Oriya, was once beaten by some political workers. The manager of a prominent news agency in Orissa was pressurised to be dropped. The newsman, undaunted, however moved the courts. He won the case later and the State Government under a different Ministry had to pay compensation.

The political influence of the owners of papers had also an undesirable effect of splitting the unity of journalists. Different unions were formed at one stage based on the loyalties of politicians. But politics has always the tendency of running an unpredictable course and as politicians cannot afford to alienate a section of journalists, the basis of such action could not be very durable. Nevertheless, political ideologies, likes and dislikes can slow up more than one way and often. Thus as at the all-India level, in Orissa also there are different unions of journalists.

In Orissa it seems to be a short jump from politics to journalism and *vice versa*, and both can be combined in the same person. Thus Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab being a veteran politician not only founded two dailies, but also runs a very popular column named *Gaan Majlis* in *The Prajatantra*. The former Chief Minister Nilamoni Routray and a member of the State Cabinet Bhairab Chandra Mahanty were earlier associated with *The Prajatantra* and *The Eastern Times*. Chintamoni Panigrahi, now an M.P. was editor of two dailies. Bibudhendra Mishra, a former Union Deputy Minister has become editor. And again the present Chief Minister was the editor of *The Prajatantra* and *The Eastern Times* for a number of years.

Thus it is possible for the journalists to have a good under-

standing with the political leaders who may consider their demands sympathetically. But at least one representative of a national daily posted at Bhubaneswar came out with the allegation that a number of newsmen had been won over by the Government and that he had been sounded to take care about his despatches which were incurring the displeasure of the government. This was of course firmly denied and the matter ultimately went to the court.

There had been a strong feeling among the local journalists that the Government showed a greater preference to representatives of outside newspapers or of news agencies than to local journalists. The reason, it was stated, could of course, be publicity outside the State which might build up or mar the image of the concerned leaders. This was more so a few decades back when Calcutta's English papers had the dominating voice in intrepreting life and events in Orissa. The second reason could be that the local papers could be taken for granted as they did not have adequate personnel nor resources to cause too much embarassment.. There has been a noticeable change in that trend as more and more local journalists are manning the news agencies and representing outside papers which now include those from Delhi, Madras and Bombay.

It is to be noted however that outside newspapers and journals have been able to secure large sums of money through the advertisements of the State Government. Last year for instance, the Readers' Digest secured Rs. 3,50,000 for its April issue, whereas *The Samaj*, the largest circulated daily, got Rs. 5 lakhs and *The Prajatantra*, the second largest daily, secured Rs. 3 lakhs in the entire year, the total government expenditure on publicity amounting to Rs. 39 lakhs.

During Emergency

It is interesting to note that during emergency the State Government directed its attack mainly against *The Prajatantra*. Dr. Mahtab in his *Gaan Majlis* column had not only condemned Gurandi firing but also called for resistance to official atrocities which he termed as Tahsilraj. He was even more forthright in his comments against Mrs Indira Gandhi. Mahtab was detained.

The residence of a staffer of *The Prajatantra* was searched. Some of its correspondents in the district towns were also detained. It has also been alleged that while there was demand for prompt payment of dues by the government from the newspaper, the Government establishments were not equally prompt in payment of their dues to the daily.

The underground paper that came out during this period was *The Krantipathe*, edited by Bharat Bhusan Thakur from a building in Sambalpur under the occupation of the R.S.S. Only two issues of this paper could be published from Sambalpur using a fictitious name, Lathor Singh Thakur, as its editors. The third issue was published from Kantabanjhi and the last was cyclo-styled when Thakur was in jail.

It must be said however, that except this underground paper no attempt has been made at any time by the ruling politicians to close down any newspaper in the State—in emergency or in normal times—although advertisements have been stopped and the papers have been harassed otherwise.

The emphasis on politics as reflected in the newspapers, diverting the attention of the readers and politicians from otherwise more important and basic issues may be one of the reasons of the ministries in Orissa not lasting for the full term of five years. Without a proper economic programme which might ensure popular participation and cooperation, the State leadership very often looks to the Centre not only for financial help but also for their stability and continuance.

In a democratic country like ours, it is neither possible nor desirable to ignore politics or politicians. But if the state, with nearly 70 percent of its people below poverty line, is to make progress to catch up with the advanced states, the approach of the newspapers should change. The same missionary zeal which had inspired the pre-independence journalists, should come into play now in building up an atmosphere for development. Politics should be made and encouraged to rise from the cesspool of vote-catching expediency to assess the needs and methods of development realistically and to enthuse and prepare the people accordingly.

23

ORIYA DAILIES AS AGENTS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION IN ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, 1977

B. B. Jena
J. K. Baral

The study deals with the role played by Oriya dailies during the assembly elections held in June 1977. All major Oriya dailies, namely, the *Samaja*, the *Prajatantra*, the *Matrubhumi*, the *Swarajya* and the *Dharitri* have been culled for content analysis. It studies the syndesis of the dailies, the audience and feedbacks of the Oriya press, as a political communication channel. Their success or failure as effective agents of political communication, which indicates their contribution towards political development, have been determined.

Section 1

Political communication refers to the transmission of politically relevant information from one part of the political system to another, and between the social and political systems. In the context of the present study it would primarily mean election-related political information reeching the people through various communication channels, both formal and informal. It would also mean the process of the views of voters reaching the political elites through communication channels. Thus the communication media function as the 'feed-back-belt', receiving and transmitting political information from and to both the political elites and voters.[1] While formal channels would include the television, radio and newspapers, informal channels refer to the face-to-face communication among the people, at times mediated through 'opinion leaders'. Communication may flow vertically or horizontally. It may flow down the ladder from the one placed at the top or from members of higher echelons. It may also run through the members of the same group.

The pattern of communication of a political system is influenced

by physical, technological, socio-cultural, economic and political factors. An area which is replete with physical barriers like mountains, deserts, forests, seas, lakes and rivers, which lacks having good road and railway connections, which is not technologically advanced, which suffers from huge illiteracy and which is economically back-ward, is prone to have a poor communication system. Moreover, communication development is apt to suffer in an authoritarian political system.

The main role of political communication is to integrate the process of political socialization, political education, political participation and political recruitment.[2] It would help increase one's political awareness, stimulate his political involvement and encourage his political participation. Exposure to political communication tends to shape one's political attitudes, political values and orientations. It would impart him good training in citizenship. Political communication is a 'mover' and is an effective agent of political modernisation.

While it would be wrong to over-emphasize the impact of mass-media on the voting behaviour of the people, it would be equally naive to greatly underplay it. It is said that communication media can have hardly any intended impact on the voting choice of the people. They would be more effective in reinforcing the existing attitudes of voters than in modifying or changing them.[3] Moreover, the people tend to see and hear communications that are favourable and congenial to their predispositions.[4] It is, however, contended by some writers that voting behaviour, in some cases, may be influenced by communication-media. A voter who has not yet decided as to whom he would vote for would tend to be influenced by the channels of political communications.[5] Moreover, the voters who are subjected to cross-pressurization are also likely to be influenced by the agents of political communications. As a result of his exposure to mass-media,—mainly newspapers—, the voter gains knowledge of the various aspects of the elections, namely, the personality of candidates, and the ideologies and programmes of the contesting political parties/candidates. His political consciousness tends to increase due to his seeing the election through newspapers. Mass-media act as 'activators', in the sense that they motivate voters to take active part in elections, and to cast their votes. Further, they seem to infuse

'rationality' into the political process. Various issues relating to the election are, by and large, 'freely and democratically' discussed in newspapers. Political parties and candidates would be inclined to be responsible because of their consciousness that they would be keenly watched by newspapers. Thus an independent press would infuse rationality, responsibility, maturity, and democracy into a political system.

The news media-politics interaction may be discussed on three heads, namely, the state control of the news media, the partisanship of the newspapers, and the 'integration' of media-political elites.[6] Direct or indirect control of newspapers by the state would make the former subservient to the latter. In an ideal type of state control of news-media, the latter would just parrot what the former says. Newspapers, when they are partisan, would be affected with bias and prejudice. They would be inclined to distort the information in favour of political parties/persons they respectively support. Lastly, in a transitional model of communication, both the media-elites and political elites mostly hail from the same socio-economic background, and they tend to undergo similar process of political socialisation. The same interests/persons might control both the media world, and the political world as there is a great deal of interaction between the news media and electoral politics.

Section 2

Orissa, one of the most backward states in India, is like many other states not uniform in backwardness. Because of its demography and historical antecedents, the state is characterised by uneven regional development. In terms of socio-economic and political modernisations, the four coastal districts, namely, Balasore, Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam, are easily differentiated from the rest of the state. While these four districts consist more of plains than of mountains, most of the other districts are just the opposite. Being enriched by fertile soil and good irrigation facilities, they produce more crops than most others. Historically, the eastern region of the state was placed under direct British rule whereas the western region consisted mostly of princely states with predominantly feudal socio-economic structures. The

direct British contact facilitated, though at a slow rate, the socio-economic and political modernisation of the eastern region and made it more advanced than the rest of the state.

The backwardness of Orissa is compounded by the fact that the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people, who are mostly poor, illiterate and ignorant, constitute a large chunk of the population of the state.[6] While the scheduled caste population is more or less equally distributed among the different districts, the scheduled tribe population is unevenly distributed. The latter form more than half of the populations of Mayurbhanj, Koraput and Sundargarh districts, and nearly forty percent of the populations of Keonjhar and Boudh-Phulbani districts.[7] It is significant to note that they form a very small part of the populations of the four coastal districts, namely, Cuttack, Puri, Ganjam and Balasore. The uneven distribution of the tribal population in Orissa is, in a way, the correct indicator of the unbalanced development of the different districts of Orissa, more or less, in the same order.

In terms of communication the coastal districts are more developed than others. Both South Eastern Railway and the National Highway pass through them. Most of the other districts are hilly, mountainous and silvans. As a result, they do not have good communication links.

The literacy rate of the four coastal districts is much higher than that of other districts. For example, the literacy rate of Cuttack district is 36.4 percent whereas that of Koraput district is only 10.6 per cent. One will get the same picture in taking the other indicators of development like the number of recognised colleges, the number of recognised schools, and the number of students in colleges depicting the educational development of the state.

In spite of the presence of the large quantity of rich minerals in western Orissa and in Koraput district, the coastal Orissa is economically more developed due to more fertile soil and better irrigation facilities.

Consequently the flow of the formal communication in the state is as uneven as its regional development. Even though there is a large number of radio-owners in the state, only a few of them listen to news bulletins. Television is yet to spread in Orissa. Thus the Oriya dailies are the main channel of communication in

the state. (The number of the readers of English dailies is quite limited). The Table-1 suggests that the readers of Oriya dailies in coastal Orissa far outnumber those in other districts.[3]

Table—1. District-wise circulation of Oriya Dailies*.

District	*Samaja*	*Prajatantra*	*Dharitri*	*Matrubhumi*	*Swarajya*
Cuttack	11,795	4,698	5,111	847	966
Puri	9,701	4,473	5,123	1,484	4,540
Balasore	2,228	6,279	262	172	952
Ganjam	4,703	1,841	505	364	1,135
Koraput	798	2,066	237	57	331
Sambalpur	2,964	1,253	571	2,155	669
Mayurbhanj	1,154	1,575	262	1,765	359
Keonjhar	1,190	751	438	1,020	304
Dhenkanal	1,795	393	194	1,962	322
Sundargarh	3,210	1,332	216	755	651
Kalahandi	326	1,167	260	27	768
Bolangir	542	653	290	740	721
Phulbani	206	1,916		45	176

* Except the Samaja, the data about the other dailies were collected from their respective circulation managers. The data regarding the Samaj were collected from the Audit Bureau of Circulations Ltd., Bombay. The Samaja data are not exact, but approximate. They were computed from the figures of Audit Bureau, Bombay, on the town-wise circulation of the newspaper.

Only a small minority of the population has access to the Oriya dailies. The extent to which the vast majority, which do not have access to Oriya dailies, would be informed of the happenings in the state and outside would depend upon the quality of these 'opinion leaders' and the communication contents of the state-based newspapers. Since the 'opinion leaders' in transitional societies are not skilled and effective communicators, the principal thrust, falls on the nature of the communication fed by the Oriya dailies.

Section 3

Except *News of the World*, the only English daily in Orissa

which is not of much circulation, all other dailies in the state are Oriya. The major dailies are the *Samaja*, the *Prajatantra*, the *Matrubhumi*, the *Dharitri* and the *Swarajya*. Besides these, three other small Oriya dailies which are published from Berhampur Sambalpur and the Bolangir, have limited circulation. Therefore, the study confines itself to examining the views of five major Oriya dailies on Assembly Elections held in June, 1977.

The newspapers in Orissa are mostly individual-oriented. They tend, to a large extent, to reflect the personal ideologies, views and prejudices of the editors and/or proprietors. Although most of these dailies are formally owned by some 'trusts', they seem to be in practice 'proprietory concerns'. While portraying the major forces, trends and the changes in national and state politics, they often indulge in giving much space, for or against, individual political actors, although the two functions are not necessarily unrelated to each other. The personality-obsession of Oriya dailies is, to some extent, the function of the backwardness of the state; the more underdeveloped a region is, the more its newspapers would be attracted towards personalities of the 'Press Lords' rather than systemic phenomena.

The *Samaj*, having the largest circulation, was first started in 1919 by Gopabandhu Das, a great freedom fighter. It then took up the cause of India's freedom, and that of the creation of Orissa as a separate state.[9] It gained wide reputation for its objectivity and impartialty. But only after Radhanath Rath, the present incumbent, became its editor, did the newspaper tend to become increasingly personal and partisan. Rath, for a long time, was an important political leader and a Congress minister in the state. The political position of the *Samaj*, appeared to fluctuate with the changing political fortune of its editor.

Hare Krushna Mahtab, an ex-Chief Minister and an ex-Cabinet Minister at the centre established the *Prajatantra* in the midst of freedom movement.[10] Its primary objective was to champion the cause of freedom through the newspaper. After independence, Mahtab emerged as the most important political actor in the state. The *Prajatantra* has always faithfully mirrored his views and position regarding politics.

The *Matrubhumi* was started in 1951 by Bala Krishna Kar, a man of strong individuality.[11] The *Matrubhumi* for a long time

launched a crusade against the Congress, the ruling party in the state, and focussed the views of opposition leaders. The newspaper seemed to drift away from its old path after Bichitrananda Kar, the son of Bala Krishna Kar, was appointed its editor. In the 1974 Assembly Elections he contested from Cuttack on a Congress ticket offered by Nandini, the Chief Minister. As expected, the *Matrubhumi* supported the Congress in that election, and since that time Kar appears to have become a 'Nandini man'.

Some ex-rulers of Orissa—particularly of western Orissa—financed the starting of the *Matrubhumi* with the hope that the newspaper would champion their cause of anti-merger. (Soon after independence the Orissa politics was dominated by the question of merging Oriya-speaking ex-princely states with Orissa). When they felt that the *Matrubhumi* identified itself more with the common man than with them, they started a newspaper of their own named the *Ganatantra*. It was renamed the *Swarajya* in 1966 after the Ganatantra Parishad, the party of Oriya kings, merged with the Swatantra party. The *Swarajya* has always stood with the ex-rulers—particularly the kings of Kalahandi and Bolangir—and shown more concern for the problems of western Orissa.

It would be relevant to have a look at the political stance of the 'press-lords', when the 1977 Assembly Elections was held. Radhanath Rath, a long-time Congress man and an ex-cabinet minister in the state, had severed his relations with the Congress Party. But he was not openly anti-Congress. He tried to steer a middle course between the warring political parties. His stance of equidistance from both the camps was greatly reflected in the position that the *Samaj* took on the Assembly Elections of 1977.

Hare Krishna Mahtab who was the Chief Minister twice in the 1950s staged a revolt against the Congress in 1966 and led a new regional party called the Jana Congress. He rejoined the Congress in 1971, but defected from it again in 1974. He was one of the main leaders of the Pragati Party which fought against the Congress in 1974 Assembly Elections. During the National Emergency of 1975 he was arrested by the Nandini ministry. It is important to note that Mahtab nourished a grudge against Nandini Satapathy since 1971 when his hope to lead a Congress ministry that year was smashed to pieces as Nandini who was

then in the good books of Indira Gandhi succeeded in getting the Centre's mandate to lead the Congress Government in Orissa. Thus during the Assembly Elections of July 1977, Mahtab extended support to the Janata, but not to Nandini who was a Janata candidate. Through his *Prajatantra*, he launched a vigorous campaign against Nandini's candidature.

Bichitrananda Kar was the editor of the *Matrubhumi* at the time of Assembly Elections of 1977. In 1974 he had been offered the prestigious Cuttack seat by Nandini Satapathy. He lost the election, but he seemed to have remained loyal to the Congress, especially to Mrs. Satapathy. His support for Mrs. Satapathy was so strong and deep-rooted that it survived her defection from the Congress to the Janata. Thus at the time of Assembly Elections of July 1977 the *Matrubhumi* extended support to Mrs. Satapathy, but not to the Janata, the party she joined.

The *Dharitri* came into existence only in 1974 after Nandini Satapathy became the Chief Minister of Orissa. Ramanath Panda, a great lieutenant of Mrs. Satapathy, was appointed as its editor. The newspaper became virtually the mouthpiece of the Nandini camp. No wonder, the political stance of the *Dharitri* simply followed the political fortune of Mrs. Satapathy. During the Assembly Elections of July 1977 the newspaper made vigorous efforts for the victory of Mrs. Satapathy. Thus the *Prajatantra* which opposed Nandini, and the *Dharitri* which supported her were directly opposed to each other.

The *Swarajya*, as said earlier, continues to be loyal to the houses of Kalahandi and Bolangir-Patna. Bairagi Mohanty, its editor, seems to be a non-entity. Apparently he has to act according to the direction of P. K. Deo, the ex-ruler of Kalahandi and a Member of Parliament in 1977. As R. N. Singh Deo, the ex-ruler of Bolangir is dead, P.K. Deo appears to be the virtual master of the *Swarajya*, No wonder, his political position and views were fully mirrored in this newspaper.

Section 4

Radhanath Rath, the editor of the *Samaj*, having practically retired from party politics, did not extend direct and unequivocal

support to any political party during the June elections. In regard to the elections, it became ambivalent and evasive. It criticised both the Congress and the Janata for their shortcomings. It strongly attacked the Congress for 'dictatorship' and 'oppression' during the emergency.[12] It also subjected to criticism the Janata on the ground that with the beginning of the Janata rule, indiscipline in different parts of the country occurred. The *Samaj* expressed optimism that there would be naba-Kalebar—implying political change—in nine more states.[13] It also expressed satisfaction that for the first time Orissa occupied two important posts at the centre. Biju was appointed a cabinet minister, and Rabi Ray, one of the General Secretaries of the Janata.[14]

During the period under study there appeared five letters to the editor in the *Samaj*, but none of them related to the election. During the same period the newspaper contained fourteen feature articles out of which only four were on elections. But these did not discuss Orissa elections. There were seven election-oriented editorials in the *Samaj*. While four editorials were in favour of

Table—2. Election-oriented letters to the Editor

Name of the Newspaper	No. of letters a-Total; b-Election c-Non-election	No. of lines a-Total; b-Election c-Non-election
Samaja	a= 5	a=265
	b= 0	b= 0
	c= 5	c= 265
Prajatantra	a=28	a=2050
	b=16	b=1333
	c=12	c= 617
Matrubhumi	a=11	a= 423
	b= 2	b= 77
	c= 9	c= 346
Dharitri	a=74	a=4405
	b=34	b=2305
	c=40	c=2100
Swarajya	a=34	a=1635
	b= 8	b= 334
	c=26	c=1301

the Janata, two editorials were anti-Janata in tone. There was hardly any effort on its part to critically discuss the various vital issues relating to elections. It did not try to examine the election manifestoes, ideologies and programmes of different political parties. Thus it seems not to have performed its role of properly educating voters regarding election and thereby contributing towards increasing their political awareness.

The *Prajatantra* devoted a lot of space to the Orissa Assembly Elections of June 1977. Several letters to the editor, feature articles and editorials touched upon election matters.

Table—3. Individual-oriented letters to the Editor

Name of the Newspaper	Total a=number b=lines	Nandini Pro	Nandini Anti	Other Political actors	Others
Samaja	0	—	—	—	—
Prajatantra	a= 16 b=1333	—	a= 14 b=1139	a= 1 b=128	a= 6 b= 66
Matrubhumi	a= 2 b= 77	a= 1 b= 33	—	—	a= 1 b= 40
Swarajya	a= 8 b= 334	a= 1 b= 59	—	a= 2 b=128	a= 5 b=147
Dharitri	a= 34 b=2305	a= 29 b=1976	—	a= 4 b=296	a= 1 b= 33

a = The number of election-oriented letters.
b = The number of lines of those letters.

There were 28 letters to the editor published during the period under study. Sixteen of them dealt with elections. Out of 28 feature articles, twenty three covered election matters.

On the Assembly Elections of June 1977, the *Prajatantra* took a peculiar stand. It extended staunch support to the Janata, but opposed tooth and nail Nandini Satapathy who was the Janata, candidate from Dhenkanal which she had won in 1974 on a Congress ticket. This was evidently due to the personal hostility existing between Mahatab and Mrs. Satapathy, as discussed above. Anti-Nandini propaganda was carried on day in and day out both in *Prajatantra's* editorials and Mahatab's regular column called the 'Village Majlis'.

Mahtab fervently argued that 'emergency' should be the mea-

Table—4. Thematic analysis of letters to the Editor

Name of the Newspaper	Total a—letters b—line	Party and/ or ideology.	Issue	Programmes	Constituency	Individual leaders	Others
Samaja	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Prajatantra	a— 16	a— 3	a— 1	a— 0	a— 1	a— 10	a— 1
	b—1333	b— 200	b—106	b— 0	b— 82	b— 899	b— 46
Matrubhumi	a— 2	a— 0	a— 0	a— 0	a— 0	a— 1	a— 1
	b— 77	b— 0	b— 0	b— 0	b— 0	b— 33	b— 40
Swarajya	a— 8	a— 3	a— 0	a— 0	a— 2	a— 1	a— 2
	b— 334	b— 88	b— 0	b— 0	b— 128	b— 59	b— 59
Dharitri	a— 34	a— 1	a— 0	a— 0	a— 0	a— 33	a— 0
	b—2305	b— 33	b— 0	b— 0	b— 0	b—2272	b— 0

a – The number of election-oriented letters.
b – The number of the lines of those letters.

Table—5. Party-wise letters to the Editor

Name of the Newspaper	No. of Letters	No. of Lines	Janata		Congress		CPI		CPM	
			Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti
Samaja	0	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Prajatantra	6	444	a— 4 b—264	—	—	a— 2 b—180	— —	— —	— —	— —
Matrubhumi	0	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swarajya	3	171	a— 3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dharitri	5	392	b—171	—	—	a— 5 b—392	—	—	—	—

a—Number of letters relating to political parties

b—Number of lines of those letters.

suring rod of the suitability of a candidate to get the Janata ticket.[15] He said that an emergency-victim had a special claim to win the Janata ticket.[16] The *Prajatantra* editorially charged that Mrs. Satapathy, during the emergency, was a 'Kuni-Indira' or 'Mini-Indira'; she was the 'instrument' of Mrs. Gandhi in enforcing emergency in Orissa.[17] It extended strong support to Mrs. Malati Choudhury who was an independent candidate and the main rival of Mrs. Satapathy at Dhenkanal.[18] (Mrs. Choudhury is the wife of Naba Krishna Choudhury, an ex-Chief Minister of Orissa; both the husband and wife were imprisoned during the emergency). The *Prajatantra* editorially attacked Chandra Sekher the Janata President, for his support to Mrs. Satapathy.[19]

The pro-Janata stance of the *Prajatantra* would be evident from the following figures. Out of 16 election-oriented letters, six were partisan. Four of these letters supported the Janata, and two were critical of the Congress. Thus six out of sixteen letters on election were in favour of the Janata while there was not a single letter to the editor which supported the Congress.[20] Of the three editorials with party-orientation, two were pro-Janata, and one, anti-Janata.[21] The table on the party-orientation of feature articles is likely to be misleading. Table shows that there were nineteen feature articles which were anti-Janata.[22] But they, in fact, were directed against Mrs Nandini Satapathy who was the Janata candidate for Dhenkanal assembly constituency.

Table—6. Election-oriented feature-articles

Name of the Newspaper 1	No. of Articles	a—Election 2 (a)	b—Non-election 2 (b)
Samaja	14	4*	10
Prajatantra	28	23	5
Matrubhumi	4	4	0
Dharitri	22	19	3
Swarajya	18	3	15

*This does not relate to Orissa elections.

Table—7. Party-orientation of Feature Articles

Name of the Newspaper	No. of articles on ele-ctions	Pro-Janata	Anti-Janata	Pro-Congress	Anti-Congress	Others
Samaja	4	—	—	—	2	2
Prajatantra	23	2	19*	X	2	X
Matrubhumi	4	X	2	2	X	X
Swarajya	3	X	X	X	X	3
Dharitri	19	16*	3*	X	X	X

*The Party-orientation figures of the feature articles published in the *Prajatantra* and *Dharitri* are likely to mislead. All the nineteen feature articles of the *Prajatantra* described as anti—Janata, are really not directed against the whole Janata Party. They are just against one Janata candidate, namely, Nandini Satapathy. Similarly all the sixteen feature articles of the *Dharitri*, labelled as Pro-Janata, are really Pro-Nandini, a Janata candidate. The three 'anti-Janata' feature articles published in the *Dharitri* were written against those elements of the Janata who opposed the candidature of Mrs. Satapathy.

Most of the letters to the editor, features articles and editorials published in the *Prajatantra* did not discuss party ideologies, programmes, and important issues. They mostly indulged in personal attack on Mrs. Satapathy. Out of sixteen letters, fifteen related to individuals and of these letters, as many as fourteen were directed against Mrs. Satapathy.[23] Of twenty three feature

Table—8. Thematic analysis of Feature Articles

Name of the Newspaper	Total	Party/ Ideo- logy	Issue	Pro- gram- mes	Consti- tuency	Indivi- dual*	Others
Samaja	4	—	—	—	—	—	4
Prajatantra	23	—	3	—	—	19	1
Matrubhumi	4	2	—	—	—	2	—
Swarajya	3	—	—	—	—	—	3
Dharitri	19	—	—	—	—	19	—

*All the individual-oriented feature articles were either in support of or against Mrs. Nandini Satapathy. While all the 19 articles of the *Prajatantra* were anti-Nandini, all the 19 articles of *Dharitri* and the 2 articles of *Matrubhumi* were Pro-Nandini.

Table—9. Thematic analysis of Editorials

Name of the Newspaper	Total	Party/ Ideo- logy	Issue	Pro- gram- mes	Consti- tuency	Indivi- dual*	Others
Samaja	7	—	2	—	—	—	5
Prajatantra	4	—	—	—	—	4	—
Matrubhumi	9	—	2	—	—	3	4
Swarajya	18	5	2	1	—	8	2
Dharitri	16	2	—	—	—	14	—

articles, as many as nineteen were filled with anti-Nandini stuffs.[24] All the four election-oriented editorials were anti-Nandini in tone.

The above figures suggest that the *Prajatantra* gave wide coverage to elections in terms of letters to the editor, feature articles and editorials. But this coverage was unidimensional. The newspaper mostly covered only one assembly constituency—Dhenkanal—and it launched a virulent campaign against the candidature of Nandini Satapathy. As a result it failed to provide its readers with an objective and comprehensive analysis of the electoral politics in the state. The casualty was the political education of the people.

Another case of dilemma was the attitude of the *Matrubhumi* in relation to the Assembly Elections of June 1977. It was critical of the Janata Party in certain respects. But it extended its strong

Table—10. Party-orientation of Editorials

Newspaper	Total*	Janata		Congress		CPI		CPM		Others
		Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	Pro	Anti	
Samaja	7	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1*1
Prajatantra	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Matrubhumi	4	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swarajya	14	5	3	—	6	—	—	—	—	—
Dharitri	2	1*2	1*3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

*Total number of party-oriented editorials.

*1—Critical of both Janata and Congress, just on the eve of the election.

*2—It was written before the nomination battle within the Janata started.

*3—It was written during the nomination storm that Mrs. Satapathy faced. After she was nominated as the Janata candidate for Dhenkanal, the Dharitri editorially supported only Mrs. Satapathy, not her party—Janata.

support to Mrs. Satapathy's candidature from Dhenkanal. This paradox was largely due to the 'personal equation' of the editor of the newspaper. Bichitrananda Kar, the editor, was obliged to Mrs. Satapathy who had offered him the Congress ticket for Cuttack assembly constituency in 1974. Thus while his party membership (Congress) prompted Kar to make his newspaper anti-Janata, his personal relationship with Mrs. Satapathy made him support her in election against Malati Choudhury.

The *Matrubhumi* indirectly criticised that the government at the centre was going to hold state elections when not necessary. The newspaper further said that it was whimsical on the part of a Government to hold elections when the wind was favourable to it, and not to hold it, when the condition was not in its favour.[25] It also lashed at the 'severe infighting within the Janata Party'.[26]

In support of Mrs Satapathy, the *Matrubhumi* editorially said that it was ridiculous to spread scandals against a candidate, or demonstrate and fast against somebody's candidature.[27] (The comment was directed against Mahtab, Naba Krishna Choudhury and others who at that time allegedly indulged in such activities

against Mrs. Satapathy). The daily further said that the voters of any constituency should alone decide who should represent them in the legislative assembly. 'Outsiders' should not try to interfere in their affair. The voters should oppose such attempts.[28] These attacks were directed against Mahtab and Surendra Nath Dwivedi, a veteran political leader, who campaigned in Dhenkanal constituency in favour of Mrs. Choudhury and against Mrs. Satapathy. The newspaper sought to boost the image of Mrs. Satapathy by portraying her as the "lone rebel against the vested interests of the Janaty Party".

The election coverage of the *Matrubhumi* was moderate. Out of eleven letters to the editor published during the period, only two dealt with election matters.[29] But in terms of election coverage in feature articles, the newspaper did a good job. All the four feature articles, published during the period, were on elections.[30] Nine editorials were devoted to elections. The support of the *Matrubhumi* for the Congress is evident from the following figures. Neither of the two letters to the editor was in favour of any political party. But all the four feature articles were in support of the Congress.[31] Two of them were critical of the Janata while the other two favoured the Congress. Moreover, all the four editorials were against the Janata.[32] While the individual-orientation received the major share of the election coverage made by the paper, it also devoted some space to other aspects of election politics. For example, out of four election-oriented feature articles, two dealt with party ideology, while the other two were on individual actors.[33] Further, out of the nine editorials on elections, two related to various political issues, and three to individual political actors.[34]

The *Matrubhumi* thus, was anti-Janata, but 'pro-Nandini, in spite of the fact that she was a Janata candidate. This paradoxical attitude of the newspaper was due to the personal equation of its editor. The major portion of the election coverage of the *Matrubhumi* went to individual political actors. It, of course dealt with party ideologies, programmes and other issues, but not adequately.

The *Swarajya* subjected the Congress to severe criticism because of the 'excesses' committed during the emergency.[35] B. D. Jatti, then acting President of India, was criticised for having

'connived' with the Congress to stall the June elections.[36] The newspaper hailed the formation of the Janata, but attacked it for the 'errors' committed by it while distributing the party tickets for Assembly Elections. It charged that the members of the party were motivated more by the old party loyalty and groupism than by the interest of the new party.[37]

It was a surprise for the *Swarajya* to join the pro-Nandini chorus. Out of eighteen, eight editorials contained all good words about Mrs. Satapathy, and all had words about her detractors like H. K. Mahtab and Naba Krishna Choudhury. It warned the Janata Party as well as the voters to be cautious about the 'infiltrators and dividers' who sought to create division in the party. It urged the people to forgive Mrs. Satapathy, who was a party to the emergency, in the great Indian tradition of forgiving sinners.[38] The support of the *Swarajya* for Mrs Satapathy was perhaps due to the fact that the people, who were in control of the newspaper, were friendly to Mrs. Satapathy and/or hostile to Mahtab and the Janta leaders who were spearheading the campaign against her.

P. K. Deo, the 'Kalahandi Maharaja', set a few independent candidates in Kalahandi district. In extending its strong support to these candidates, the *Swarajya* urged the voters to take into account the 'qualification and suitability of candidates'.—impledly. not their party labels. Praising Deo as a 'great statesman, leader and fighter against dictatorship', the newspaper urged that in view of the need of his valuable service for the uplift of the state, he should be invited to join the Janata party and help the task of national reconstruction.[39]

The *Swarajya* revealed its regional orientation (or bias ?) by stating that western Orissa had been mostly neglected by the state governments owing to their failure to cope with some of the special problems of the region. It urged that the Janata, if elected to power, should pay special attention to western Orissa.[40]

In terms of letters to the editor, the election coverage by the *Swarajya* was not impressive. Out of 34 letters, only eight dealt with elections.[41] Similarly, only three out of eighteen feature articles contained election matters.[42] The election coverage of the newspaper tilted towards individual political actors. Out of eight letters on elections, three related to individual actors.[43] The same

was the case with the editorials. Of eighteen editorials, as many as eight were on individual political actors.[44] Besides focussing on political actors, the *Swarajya*, however, touched upon other aspects of election politics. This was especially true of the letters to the editor and the editorials published during the period. The newspaper seemed to tilt towards the Janata *vis-a-vis* the Congress. While there were three letters in favour of the Janata, there was not a single letter in support of the Congress.[45] There was not even a single feature article either supporting or opposing any political party. But out of fourteen editorials, five were pro-Janata, three anti-Janata, and six anti-Congress.[46] Thus, as against three there were eleven editorials in support of the Janata. Moreover, the 'three anti-Janata' editorials were really not against the whole party as such. These letters were simply critical of some Janata leaders who were opposed to Mrs. Satapathy's condidature from Dhenkanal.

The *Swarajya*, thus, provided good coverage to Assembly Elections of 1970. It, of course, paid a great deal of attention to individual political actors, but it also touched upon some other aspects of election politics. It was, in general, critical of the Congress, and well-disposed towards the Janata. But it criticised the Janata on the issue of Nandini's candidature. It extended strong support to the candidates of 'Kalahandi Maharaja', one of its original founders and owners.

The *Dharitri* devoted a lot of space to Assembly Elections. But its coverage was uni-dimensional. It became so much preoccupied with the election contest at Dhenkanal where Mrs. Satapathy was the Janata candidate that it neglected other constituencies and other aspects of electoral politics. The newspaper mostly sang the 'virtue-songs' of Mrs. Satapathy, and strongly criticised Mrs. Choudhury, her main opponent, and Mahtab and others who were helping Mrs. Choudhury. Even though Mrs. Satapathy was a member of the state election committee of the Janata party, the *Dharitri* did not editorially highlight the ideology and programmes of the party. Nor did it point out how it was better than other parties. It seemed to tangentially remember the Janata party only when the 'blessing' of Chandra Sekhar, the party President, was needed for election victory of Mrs Satapathy.[47] Even in its editorial of 10 June 1977, the day of polling, it only

appealed to the voters of Dhenkanal constituency to support Mrs. Satapathy. In its 19-line editorial, it did not devote a single line, except three ambiguous words "The Janata—the Janata party or the people ?—will win", urging the voters to vote for the Janata Party.[48]

The *Dharitri* sought to refute the argument made by the *Praja-tantra* that the national emergency clamped by Mrs Gandhi on 25 June 1975 should be the main criterion of getting the Janata ticket. The former argued that the people were no longer interested in knowing who did what during the emergency : they would like to know who could do what.[49]

Mrs Satapathy's newspaper sought to portray her as the "lone rebel fighting single-handed against the vested interests within the party". It charged that politicians of 'opportunism and toutism' had joined together and launched a mystery war *'Maya Yudha'* against her.[50] It was a 'religious war' between Mrs Satapathy who symbolised the *"Pandavs"* and her opponents who represented the *"Kauravs."*

Besides the editorials, Ramanath Panda, the editor of the *Dharitri*, wrote a few articles in the paper eulogising the 'virtues' of Mrs Satapathy and bitterly denouncing her opponents and critics.[51] Moreover, the newspaper reproduced several articles of old issues of *Niakhunta*, the Oriya political satire magazine, with a view to denouncing Mahtab and the Choudhury family.[52]

The *Dharitri* devoted a lot of space to the election, but its coverage was not balanced. Out of 74 letters to the editor, 34 dealt with elections.[53] Similarly, of 22 feature articles, as many as 19 contained election stuffs. The newspaper carried as many as sixteen editorials on elections. Its election coverage was highly individual-oriented. Of 34 letters on elections, as big a number as 33 dealt with individual actors.[55] And 29 of these letters were in support of Mrs Satapathy. All the feature articles (19) and editorials (16) were also individualistic, and pro-Nandini.[55] Thus there was little discussion in the *Dharitri* on party ideology, programmes, issues, and other important aspects of election. It was, by and large, pro-Janata and anti-Congress. All five party—oriented letters to the editor were pro-Janata. Of 19 feature articles 16 were in support of the Janata and 3 against it.[56] It may be noted that these three letters were directed against those elements

of the Janata who opposed her candidature from Dhenkanal. Thus the election coverage by the *Dharitri* was very ill-balanced. It heavily tilted in favour of individual-orientation. Its only task seemed to be the championing of the candidature of Mrs Satapathy, its 'owner'.

Inferences

On the basis of the above discussion, one may draw the following inferences. First, the more committed a newspaper is, the more space it would devote to election scenario. While the *Dharitri* stands at one end of the continuum, the *Samaj* belongs to its other end. The *Prajatantra* and the *Swarajya* stand next to the *Dharitri*, and the position of *Matrubhumi* is last but one. Thus in terms of their commitment—election coverage—correlation syndrome, we may arrange the newspapers in the following order: the *Dharitri*, the *Prajatantra*, the *Swarajya*, the *Matrubhumi* and the *Samaj*. Secondly, the nature of the 'ownership' of a newspaper would profoundly influence its political behaviour in general, and its attitude to General Elections in particular. As H. K. Mahtab supported the Janata but opposed Mrs Nandini Satapathy, the *Prajatantra*, his daily, carried on a vigorous propaganda campaign against her candidature from Dhenkanal in all fronts—editorials, feature articles, and letters to the editor. The same was true of the *Dharitri*, 'owned' by Mrs Satapathy who contested from Dhenkanal. The newspaper launched, day in and day out, a propaganda war in her favour. The *Matrubhumi*, on account of the personal equation between Mrs Satapathy and B. Kar, its editor, extended strong support to her. The electoral behaviour of the *Samaj* and the *Swarajya* were similarly influenced by the political attitudes of the persons who respectively controlled them. Thirdly, the over-all performance of the Oriya dailies during the Assembly Elections of June 1977 as agents of political communication was not satisfactory. They paid a great deal of attention to the personal politics at the cost of party ideology, programmes, constituency interests and the vital issues at stake. As a result, they failed to provide the electorate with well-balanced political communication, and thus, the voters were seemingly deprived of getting politically educaetd

due to the excessive personality-orientation of the Oriya dailies.

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56. Table 7.

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INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CO-ORDINATION AT DISTRICT LEVEL IN ORISSA : ROLE OF COLLECTOR AND DISTRICT MAGISTRATE

Ajit Kumar Tripathi

It has been recognised in Orissa that the Collector and the District Magistrate of a district is simultaneously the Head of Criminal, Revenue and Development Administration in a district. Students of the Indian Administrative System are well aware of the pivotal role the Collector plays in the district administration. I do not propose to go into the details of the responsibilities of the Collector and District Magistrate which can be found in any standard text book of Public Administration in India. I would briefly touch upon the different facets on inter-departmental co-ordination at the district level.

Coming to the Agriculture Department first, after the introduction of the World Bank Scheme on re-organisation of agricultural administration, agriculture has been taken away from the administrative supervision of the Block Development Officer. The Village Level Workers who are attending to various development needs of their circles have been divided into two categories. In each block, there are a set of Village Level Agriculture Workers who are accountable to the District Agriculture Officer through Agricultural Extension Officers and Supervisors. These workers no longer report to the B D O. They carry on the departmental programme of Agriculture Department. The other set of Village Level Workers, which for a long time, consisted of only 2 to 3 V L Ws. but have been augmented since the introduction of the E R R P and I R D programme look after implementation of the I R D, ERRP, NREP and other development programmes done at the block level. The Kharif and Rabi circulars sent from the Chief Secretary are addressed to the Collectors, copies of which are sent to the Deputy Directors of Agriculture and the District Agriculture Officers. These circulars are discussed in the D D C meetings if that can be convened conveniently or in a separate

meeting attended by the D D A, D A Os, D R Cs and A R Cs and Engineers of Irrigation Department. The Collector of a District is responsible for the successful implementation of the Kharif and Rabi programmes and he is expected to take up periodical reviews of the progress and achievements in the fields of transplantation supply of fertilisers, pesticides, credit and other inputs. Such of the Collectors who take adequate interest in this regard convene these co-ordination meetings regularly and ensure the co-ordination between the suppliers of the different inputs like credit, water for irrigation, seeds, fertilisers, pesticides etc. The C C Rs of the D A Os as well as D D A are initiated by the Collector. Constant goading of people and going into details of every problem is required of the Collector if he wants to make a name in the Agricultural Programmes in the district.

As regards the Co-operation Department, Collector and District Magistrate have a great role to play in ensuring timely supply of credit in Kharif and Rabi seasons through constant reviews and goadings. They also take up field visits to ensure that all the inputs required for these programmes are co-ordinated effectively. The C C R of the D R Cs is initiated by the Collector and those of the ARCs are countersigned by him. Collector, as the Chairman of the District Rural Development Agency, is represented in the Board of Directors of the District Central Co-operative Bank and his wishes are normally respected. Collector as the Chairman, DRDA, is incharge of formulating the district credit plan and getting it approved by the District Co-ordination Committee of Bankers. He is assisted in this regard by the Lead Bank Officer and Project Officer DRDA. Co-operative Banks and the Co-operation Department at the district level rely heavily on the District Magistrate for assistance in collection of co-operative dues in the district. Very often for effecting collection of co-operative dues from chronic defaulters, coercive means have to be adopted and it becomes essential that a contingent of police force accompanied by a Magistrate is sent with the collection team. Because of this organic relationship, the Collector normally does not find any problem in effecting inter-departmental co-ordination between Agriculture and Co-operation Department at the district level, but occasionally one comes across officers in the Agriculture Department who take World Bank agreements on

re-organisation of Agriculture Department literally and issue instructions to the field staff not to participate in any development programme at the block level other than the T & V (Training & Visit) programme. However, once such facts are brought to the notice of State Government, corrective steps are taken. The Director of Agriculture, Horticulture, Soil Conservation and Registrar of Co-operative Societies very often keep in touch with the Collector and when their departmental reviews are taken up at the district level, they invariably associate the Collector.

The Community Development Rural Reconstruction and Social Welfare Department which is the administrative department of the Block Development Officers do not have any separate District Level Officer who has administrative control over the BDOs. For them, Collector is the District Level Officer who exercises full administrative control over the BDOs through the Sub-Divisional Officers. There is a post of District Development Officer who looks after the block organisations in the district and assists the Collector. He is a Jr. Class I Officer of the Orissa Administrative Service and is squarely placed under the Collector. For all the programmes carried on by the Community Development & Social Welfare Department, Collector is the responsible Officer at the district level. These include the special nutrition, applied nutrition and CARE feeding programmes. After introduction of the IRD, NREP and ERRP Programmes, the importance of the Community Development blocks have been felt again and the block administration has been strengthened by incorporation of more VLWs and Supervisory staff. A year back, DRDAs have been taken from A & C Department and placed with the CD & SW Department. BDO has been recognised as the kingpin of all programmes in the Block. The Collector has to take up as many field inspections as possible and periodic reviews in blocks, sub-divisional offices at the district head quarters from time to time. He along with the Additional District Magistrates and Sub-Divisional Officers have to inspect each block at least once in a year and supervise execution of all the programmes.

As regards the Transport Department, the Collector is the Chairman of the Regional Transport Authority in the district and he is assisted by R T O, Motor Vehicle Inspector, Addl. R T O (Enforcement) and other officials of Transport Department. In

some districts, personnel from Police Department are also taken on deputation to Transport Department to help enforcement measures. This practice is on the decline. The R T A is a body constituted by the State Government in which M. L. As and other non-officials nominated by Government are present. Realisation of the target in collection of M V Tax, passenger tax, registration fee etc. is the sole responsibility of the Collector and he often organises mobile courts etc. for this purpose. As the Chairman of the R T A, he hears appeal cases against decisions of the R T O. All the important correspondences of the Transport Commissioner and Transport Department to the district are adressed to the Collector and District Magistrate.

As regards the Education Department, the Collector and the District Magistrate have an important role to play as he is the Chairman of the governing bodies of all recognised private colleges in the District, except when the colleges are very new and small in size or they are of a minority character. Collector is also taken as a member or Chairman in the managing committee of the Government Colleges at the district headquarters. But this practice is not uniform in all the districts. As regards elementary education, the programme for starting of new schools, up-gradation of different schools *etc.* can only be accepted by Government if they are approved by District Development Board of which, the Collector is the Chairman. The District Youth Co-ordinators are placed squarely under the Collector & District Magistrate and the Collector is responsible for co-ordination of all youth services and rural sports *etc.* in the district. The District Sports Organiser is placed under the administrative control of the Collector. Collector is the President of the District Athletic Association and in this capacity, he can render all assistance for holding athletic meetings and competitions. He can guide the sports activities in the district in the proper channel. During periods of student strike and unrest, the Collector has to keep close liaison with principals of different colleges and headmasters of different schools. These days, the Collector has an important role to play in peaceful conducting of University and Board Examinations in the district. The Collector is also in charge of the Adult Education Programme of the district and the District Adult Education Officer reports to him directly for orga-

nising the Adult Education Camps. Collector is the Chairman of the District level Advisory Committee on Adult Education.

The Collector is the Chairman of the District Co-ordination Committee for NSS Schemes and when he takes adequate interest in it, he can channalise the energy of the College and University Youth.

The Collector is the head of the District Treasury. He initiates the CCR of the District Treasury Officer and is the Counter-signing Officer of CCRs of all the Sub-Treasury Officers and Special Treasury Officers in the district. He is the inspecting officer for all Treasuries in the district and it is his responsibility to ensure the smooth working of the treasury system in the district. The Collector is concerned with the Finance Department in another way. The district small savings target is given to the Collector and unless he takes personal interest in achieving the target, it would be impossible to achieve any substantial mobilisation in small savings in the district. The District Savings Organiser as well as Sub-Divisional Small Savings Organisers are squarely placed under the administrative control of the Collector.

The Collector is the head of the Civil Supplies administration in the district. The Civil Supplies Officer of the district, who is also now Branch Manager of the Orissa Civil Supplies Corporation in the district, is placed squarely under the administrative control of the Collector and District Magistrate. The target for procurement of food grains is given to the Collector and he is also the disbursing agent of funds received from State Government/Corporation for procurement. All the rationing, enforcement and regulatory measures of the Civil Supplies Department are administered through the Collector. The Collector is all in all for the District Civil Supply establishment. He is assisted in this regard by one of the ADMs. But responsibilities for any failure of the system at the district level would squarely rest with the Collector. He distributes the district allotments of rice, wheat, sugar, cement and many other essential commodities in the sub-divisions, urban areas and the blocks. As and when necessity for relief arises, it is the Collector who procures food materials on an emergency basis. During times of shortages of petrol, diesel, Amulspray, *suji*, *maida*, edible oil and other food

materials, responsibilities of the Collector increase manifold. The people in the district as well as the Government look to him for everything in Civil Supplies.

The Collector has an important responsibility in the social forestry and farm forestry programmes of the Forest Department. He co-ordinates the whole afforestation programme of the district. The different forest divisions as well as afforestation divisions of the district report to him for the progress of the afforestation programmes. During *Banamahostav* programme, the Collector of the district arranges and participates in ceremonial functions for transplantation of saplings in his district and his public relations wing renders all assistance required to the Forest Officers in this regard.

The CCRs of the Divisional Forest Officers in regular Divisions and Afforestation Divisions also are initiated by the Collector. Normally, the Collector does not face any problem in co-ordination of activities of the Forest department. But the Collector faces a delicate situation when there is any conflict between the Forest Staff and the Police.

As regards Fishery department, the Fishery Extension Officers in different blocks report to the B D O. Since pisciculture is an important source of income for the Panchayats, the B D O take particular care of the pisciculture programme in their areas. The Collector is the Chairman of the Fish Farmers Development Agency in his district where there is such an agency. The CCRs of the Chief Executive Officer of the FFDA and the Assistant Director (Fisheries) are initiated by the Collector. The Collector, as a Chairman of the D R D A, which is responsible for the successful implementation of the I R D Programme, has an important role to play in pisciculture at the district level. The Officers of the Fisheries Department act in close co-ordination with Block, Sub-Division and District staff.

The Animal Husbandry Department has a very important role to play in IRD and ERRP Programmes of the district and the District Veterinary Officer is accountable to the Collector for the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry programmes in the district. In such of the districts where the district milk unions have been organised on the Anand Pattern, the Collector is the Chairman of the District Co-Operative Milk Union and he has a very impor-

tant role to play in collection and supply of milk in the district. The heads of departments of Forest, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry works in close co-ordination with the Collector so far as implementation of the development programmes in the district is concerned. Many of them are dependent on IRD fund which is channelised through DRDA.

The Collector is the highest official at the field level for the Harijan and Tribal Welfare Department. The District Welfare Officer and the Branch Managers of the Scheduled Caste Financing Corporations are squarely placed under the administrative control of the Collector. Through the District Welfare Officer and the SDOs the Collector exercises adequate control over the ADWOs at the sub-divisional level and the Welfare Extension Officers at the block level. Section 22 of Orissa Land Reforms Act requires that for purchase or any transfer of Land from a member of Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe to a non-member, permission of the Revenue Officer is required. In case no such permission has been obtained, the sale or transfer becomes null and void and Section 23 of the O L R Act provides a penalty to the transferee. The Sub-Divisional Officers and in some areas the Special Officers of the Revenue Department are engaged as trying Magistrates for those offences and the Court of the District Magistrate is the First Appellate Court. The Welfare Extension Officers and the ADWOs of Harijan & Tribal Welfare Department as well as Revenue Inspectors of the Revenue Department are responsible for detecting such transfers and starting prosecution in appropriate courts. A Collector who takes active interest in this matter always fixes up targets for such detection and during the course of his tours, he reviews the progress made. For integrated development of the tribal areas, different Integrated Tribal Development projects are organised in the State. The Collector is the Chairman of these ITD projects and he is assisted by an Officer either of the rank of an ADM or SDO in this regard. In preparing budget estimates for these ITD projects in selecting and approving departmental schemes and in supervising the implementation of the different programmes in the ITDPs, the Collector can play an effective role in the development of the tribal people and tribal areas in the district.

The Collector has an important responsibility to play in

achievement of targets for family planning and he is also a Visiting Officer for the district and sub-divisional headquarters hospitals. He is the President of the Tender Committee for purchase of materials to the district headquarter hospitals. The CDMO reports to the Collector from time to time regarding achievements in the field of family welfare. As Chairman of the District Development Board, the Collector has an effective voice in selection of places for starting of a new dispensary and up-gradation of different health institutions. The Collector is also Inspecting Officer for Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic dispensaries wherever such institutions exist. He is the Chairman of the District Level Committee for recommending compensation in cases of death in family planning operations.

The Collector is head of the criminal administration in the district and it is the duty of the S P to keep him in touch on different important matters in this regard. The maintenance of law and order is a joint responsibility of the Collector and S.P. and the Collector can legitimately issue necessary directions and guidelines to the S P regarding this. The relationship between the SP and the Collector can be the subject matter of a separate paper altogether and I do not wish to deal with the matter elaborately here. The CCR of the SP is initiated by the Collector and the CCRs of Sub-divisional Police Officers and Addl. S.P. are countersigned by him. After the separation of the executive from the judiciary and after the separation of prosecution from investigation, the position and authority of the District Magistrate *vis-a-vis* the District Police establishment has been diluted and it requires a good deal of tact on the part of the Collector these days to carry on the law and administration in the district. It is a peculiar position the present day Collector finds himself in, where he is not always consulted in ways and means to tackle a problem, but he has to accept the blame if things go wrong.

As regards administration of Jails and the Directorate of Prisons, the district jail as well as the sub-jails are squarely placed under the Collector and the Collector is the Chairman of the visitors committee to the district/central or circle jail. It is his duty to make frequent visits to these jails and ensure that proper conditions prevail inside the prisons. The CCRs of all gazetted staff in the jail establishment are either initiated or countersigned

by him. It is unfortunate that Collectors very often are neglecting this part of their responsibility due to heavy pressure of work and engagements.

The Collector is the head of the Urban Development administration in the district and all grants to the urban local bodies are routed through the Collector and the utilisation certificates by these bodies are submitted to the Government after his countersignature. He is the Inspecting Officer for all Municipalities and NACs and in this regard he is assisted by his ADMs and SDOs. He can take up review of the receipts and development works of all these local bodies and Government, attach great importance to the recommendations of the Collector for development and administration of the urban local bodies. When the municipality of a district headquarter or important cities like, Bhubaneswar, Berhampur or Rourkela is superseded or elections are not held in time to these bodies, the Collector acts as the Chairman of the Municipality. The CCRs of the Executive Officers of all urban local bodies are either initiated or countersigned by him. The Collector has an important role to play in execution of rural water supply programme and the Executive Engineers of the PHB act under his guidance and direction in this regard.

The District Information and Public Relations Officers as well as Sub-divisional Information and Public Relations Officers are squarely placed under the Collector and he is the Inspecting Officer for all these Officers. He decides on the strategies regarding keeping contacts with the press and the Public as well as for securing adequate publicity for Government programmes. This role assumes a great significance during periods of communal disturbances, natural calamities, student strikes or periods of war. The Collector has to keep a vigilant eye on the local press.

The Collector is the Chairman of the District Advisory Committee for DICs and he plays an effective role in the development of small scale and cottage industries in the district in this capacity. As Chairman of the District Co-ordination Committee for Bankers, he can play an effective role in arranging finances for deserving small scale and cottage industries. He is the final authority in allotting revenue land and sanctioning exemption of octroi duty to new units.

The engineers of Irrigation Department who are incharge of

the maintenance of canals depend on the Collector for effective distribution of canal water to the irrigated areas. As and when necessary the Collector provides them with force against canal offences. The Collector is the counter-signing authority for the CCRs of the Executive Enginer of the Irrigation Department in his district. The NREP programme is administered by the Collector and he effects inter-departmental coordination. For all projects taken up in this programme his approval is taken.

The Collector is the Inspecting Officer for the Employment Exchanges in the district and the District Employment Exchange Officers also report to the Collector on important matters from time to time. CCRs of these officers as well as District Labour Officers are initiated by the Collector. In industrial and mining areas, the Collector has an important responsibility towards the labour force.

Realisation of revenue from Mining is an important responsibility of the Collector in those districts having mining areas and the District Mining Officer is placed under the administrative control of the Collector. It is on the recommendation of the Collector and District Magistrate that Mining leases are granted.

The District Statistical Officer and the Addl. District Statistical Officer who assist the Collector in formulation of the district plans are placed under the administrative control of the Collector. Since district plans have only paper value in our state and no divisible resources are placed with the Collector for apportionment in different schemes and areas, this function does not assume any importance.

The Collector as the head of the revenue and relief administration, is squarely responsible for registration, maintenance of land records, collection of excise revenue and enforcement of excise laws, collection of land revenue and water rate and administration of relief in natural calamities.

Thus, it can be seen that in Orissa, there is no bifurcation between regulatory and development administration. As a result, the responsibilities of the Collector are enormous whereas powers at his command are few. In the interest of development administration, it would be better if Orissa follows Gujarat and Maharastra pattern of having two separate district heads for development and regulatory administration. In bigger districts like

Cuttack, Koraput, Puri, Sambalpur and problematic districts like Balasore, Sundergarh and Ganjam and recently Dhenkanal, it becomes impossible to do full justice to the role and responsibility of a Collector and District Magistrate. The size of the Revenue Districts should be reduced in the case of districts like Koraput, Kalahandi, Puri, Cuttack, Ganjam, Sambalpur, Dhenkanal. There should be a Deputy Development Commissioner of the same or equivalent seniority and rank as the Collector who would be in effective control of all the development programmes in the district. This officer should be the Chief Executive of the Zilla Parishad if there is any and Chairman of DDC, DDB, DRDA, DCC and Chair the Advisory Committee of DIC. The Collector should be kept in charge of Law, Revenue, Land Records, Land Reforms Relief, Law and Order, Protocol, Civil Supply, Transport and all other regulatory measures such as Elections, Labour *etc.* and Welfare measures like Red Cross.

To quote Dr. R. K. Vepa, "District Administration needs to be an agent of change and not a mere instrument of continuity; for too long it has regarded itself as a preserver of the existing order and not as a pioneer". Administration is meant to achieve something and unless the Collector gets this satisfaction from his job in a district, the whole exercise in managing a district becomes futile and at the end one feels a bit frustrated.

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DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN ORISSA : A REAPPRAISAL

V. Eshwar Anand

District administration is defined as the "management of public affairs within a territory marked off for the purpose".[1] It is one of the most important characteristics of the Indian Administrative System and has been one of the most powerful institutions.[2] As far back as 200 years ago, the district had been evolved by history in the country as a convenient unit of administration.[3] District administration, in a sense, comprehends a wide spectrum of public administration in India.

District administration includes all the agencies of Government, the individual officials, functionaries and public servants. It comprehends all institutions for the management of public affairs in the district, all the corporate bodies such as Panchayats of different kinds, Panchayat Samitis, Municipal Councils of every kind Thus, district administration provides the principal points of contact between the citizen and the process of Government. It is the cutting edge of the tool of public administration and this is what constitutes its vital significance in the nation's Government.

During the British Rule, district administration had a common pattern throughout India with some differences of detail to suit local conditions and circumstances. To a large extent, the district as a very important unit of the Government, lent an element of unity and stability to the administration in the country. It helped the British to govern the country with a strong hand and, to an extent, to keep in touch with the opinions and feelings of the local population.

As in other States of India, the established pattern of district administration is followed in Orissa where every inch of soil forms a part of district at the head of which there is a District Collector. When Orissa became a separate province on 1 April, 1936, the District Collectors had to face a multitude of administrative problems. Though they were dealing with established laws prevalent in regular districts, in their new role. They had to follow

the laws, rules, regulations and customs prevalent in the other neighbouring provinces. The matter became more complicated when the 24 Princely States were merged in Orissa in 1948 and were subsequently vested with civil, criminal and revenue powers and to decide cases in accordance with the principles of justice, equity and good conscience under paragraph 4(c) of the Orissa Administration of State Order, 1948.[4]

Though a few ex-States had written laws, most of them were guided under the executive orders of rulers which had the force of the statutes. On merger, the people of some ex-States, accustomed to unwritten laws, expected the same type of administration from the administrators who were put to an embarrassing position to adjust themselves to the new environment.

In addition, the Government's attitude to accomodate the wishes of the people by listening to their demands voiced through the newly formed Advisory Councils of which the Collectors were Presidents, put the letter in a difficult situation. Abnormal political situation together with some agitations instigated by disturbing elements in some of these merged territories made the Collector ever alert.[5]

In recent times, however, the importance of the district adminitration and position of the Collector have undergone a radical change. While the Collector's role has weakened considerably in the development and the other facets of administration have grown in complexity and depth. No reform can be effective unless the nodal system of district administration is suitably strengthened and the role of the Collector *vis-a-vis* the other officials of the district is properly examined.

The new role of the Collector flows essentialy from the transition underway from the "Minimum Government" to the "Optimum Government", from the regulatory-cum-revenue administration to the welfare oriented democratic set-up geared to the programmes of national reconstruction. This study, therefore, aims at reassessing the present role of the Collector in three important wings of district administration : law and order, development and redressal of public grievances.

Law and Order Administration

As the head of the criminal administration of the district, the

Collector and District Magistrate control and direct the police and where necessary, in consultation with the Superintendent of Police make such disposition of the force as is required for the maintenance of law and order control of crime.[6] Their powers can be broadly classified into two groups, namely, control of the police and supervision over crime situation and law and order.[7] In the wake of serious law and order problems involving the people at large, the Collector is called upon to play his role with the active support of the Superintendent of Police.

Under the Criminal Procedure Code, the Collector combines in himself the functions of a judge with those of a policeman.[8] He is ultimately responsible for the prevention and detection of crime. His important duties as District Magistrate are two-fold : First, he regularly inspects police stations giving special attention to the proper working of the Arms Act, maintenance of Station diary, investigation and preparation of cases for the courts and working of the officers of the police stations. Secondly, he conducts periodic police-Magistracy meetings to discuss problems concerning control of road traffic, proper administration of the Motor Vehicles Act and effective patrolling of areas marked as sensitive pockets for breach of peace and normalcy.[9]

After the separation of the judiciary from the executive on the recommendation of the Senapati-Narasingham Committee of 1953, the position of the District Collector in Orissa underwent substantial change. Nowadays, the respect of police establishment for the Collector and District Magistrate seems to have dwindled and the Superintendent of Police treats the former more as an equal rather than superior. Again, after the separation of the agencies of prosecution and investigation, the Collector's control over police in supervising the prosecution of case has become insignificant. In many fields, it is more the personal equation between the Collector and Superintendent of Police which counts rather than a superior-subordinate relationship. Nowadays, the Collector is not consulted even in the development of Armed Forces and the Superintendent of Police takes his own decision.

Over the years, several arguments have been adduced against dual control in law and order administration.[10] First, it is felt that the present system has given rise to delay, indecision and

inefficiency. Secondly, the exercise of general functional control by the District Magistrate over the Superintendent of Police shows a poor chain of command. A lesser role for District Magistrate will, however, belittle the importance he deserves. Owing to the service affiliation, and the prestige it commands, the District Magistrate brings effective coordination acting as a buffer between the people and the police. While the Superintendent of Police looks at the law and ord.r problems from the police angle, the District Magistrate, by virtue of his close contact with the people, looks at them from a broader perspective. This promotes, in ample measure, a well integrated system of field administration.

The argument that the District Magistrate's power to write the Character and Conduct Rolls of the Superintendent of Police which has led to the erosion of the latter's individually even in departmental matters, does not seem to be reasonable. In this regard, the pattern that obtains in Maharashtra could be introduced in other States in which the Deputy Inspector General of Police initiates the Character and Conduct Rolls of the Superintendent of Police and then forwards it to the District Magistrate for his opinion. The letter is expected to confine his remarks to a general assessment of the former's work with particular reference to law and order.[11] It would be worthwhile if the District Magistrate annually records his views of the Superintendent of Police's performance only after having received from the latter a note on his performance during the period under review.[12]

Development Administration

After India attained independence, the District Administration was made a partner in the development process in which the Collector emerged as the overall agent of the State Government occupying a cardinal position. As the Collector was assigned a challenging role in the successful implementation of the development programmes, the task was onerous calling for missionary zeal, scientific foresight and an all-pervading spirit of selfless service.

With the introduction of Panchayati Raj, a structure had emerged at the district level where the Collector's association with

the emergent system and the role assigned to him under it varied from State to State.[13] Except in Gujarat and Maharashtra, however, there seems to be no happy union of the administrative system with the political system in any other State. In these two States, the Collector has been kept out of the Panchayati Raj system and the district officials dealing with departments like Cooperatives, education, health, social welfare and veterinary services have been placed with Zilla Parishads under the administrative control of the Chief Executive Officer. As a result, the latter could emerge as the coordinator of all development programmes in these two states.

The role of the Collector in development administration does not find a "clear" and "precise definition".[14] Except in the fields of revenue, law and order and natural calamities, his role as a coordinator seems to be "nebulous".[15] In Orissa, the Collector very often faces the problems of departmental verticalism while seeking horizontal coordination at the district level as the functionaries of all technical departments, who are under him, deal directly with their respective departmental heads at the State headquarters.

In recent years, though the Union and State Governments have launched several special projects, the Collectors face the gnawing problem of inter-sector transfer of funds. In Orissa, for example, owing to lack of a comprehensive policy on district planning, allocation of developmental funds comes to the district through the respective departmental heads and not through the Collector. The Collector is, no doubt, asked to conduct reviews of the developmental schemes and to inform the Government from time to time. But then, he cannot divert funds from one administrative unit to another without the prior approval of the Government. Unlike Gujarat and Maharashtra, in many states including Orissa, as a fixed percentage of the divisible plan allocation is not placed with the Collector within the district, the latter's role in developmental plan administration seems to be of little value and significance.

It is a pity that today's Collector hardly finds time to effectively supervise the implementation of special projects and other developmental programmes. He has been exposed to so many stresses and strains that he has become a busy man having no time and energy to get deep into any matter and pursue things

to their logical conclusion. For instance, nowadays attention paid by the Collecter to traditional items of revenue work seems to be much less when compared to the earlier days. As per the Orissa Land Reforms Act, the Collector is the Court of Revision. However, since time allotted for case work is extremely insufficient, the work suffers. In Orissa, a number of cases have piled up in transport and civil supply matters also.

Similarly, the Collector is not able to effectively supervise municipal administration. The relationship between the Collector and local bodies seems to be poor. The Collector signs the bills for payment of grants-in-aid to urban local bodies and he countersigns their utilisation certificates. However, owing to constraints of time, he is not able to exercise any supervisory power over these bodies. Except in times of crises, those bodies are allowed to fend for themselves. In the case of superceded municipalities, the Collector is the Chairman. However, he is not able to do justice to his job as he is not a full-time Chairman. He is burdened with so many responsibilities that he has to depend more on the Executive Officers. The routine files of a municipality requiring the signature and approval of a chairman are so much that there seems to be little scope for innovation and development.

But then, if the Collector is to play a predominant and successful role in development administration, the various hierarchical structures in District Administration, too, need drastic restructuring. Unfortunately, in Orissa, the integrating nature of the block development structure has considerable been weakened and reduced from a development oriented role to mere supervisory and data collection function. In the absence of a proper evaluation cell in the block officers, the feedback of information to the Collectors had been fragmentary except in cases of law and order and revenue administration.

Moreover, the information available to the Collectors and sub-Divisional Officers on various socio-politico-economic indices of development has been "scrappy" and even the sources of such information are "ill-defined".[18] Instances galore : the Collectors get necessary information only through reports submitted by the respective derpartmental heads in the District Development Committee meetings. As there is neither adequate staff nor

expertise available at the block level, several important schemes like the Integrated Rural Development Programme, National Rural Employment Programme, Drought Prone Area Programme, not being properly monitored. In Orissa, these drawbacks have been discussed from time to time in several conferences of the District Collectors. However an effective framework is yet to be evolved.

For the time-bound monitoring of the developmental schemes, the block administration will have to be strengthened by introducing effective evaluation cells. The quality of the BDO should be improved and Extension Officers placed under his direct control so that his leadership would be acceptable to all. All the Extension Officers should have detailed job charts so that the Collector, Sub-Divisional Officers and other inspecting officials would be in a better position to make best use of them. The strength of the village Level Workers in each block should also be increased to cope with the additional work load.

In the light of poor coordination between the district and State headquarters, the coordinating agency at the district level will have to be made more powerful. This calls for the continuation of the Collectors as the Chairmen of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). The BDO can also be transferred under DRDA. However, many may not endorse this suggestion as the BDOs perform such odd jobs like preparing rainfall reports and supervising relief and rehabilitation works. In fact, part of BDO's coordination role emanates from the performance of such odd jobs. If these are taken away, his role and influence in the Block administration might be affected. In this context, it is worth considering whether, instead of Project Officers at the district level, additional BDOs at the block level should be put in exclusive charge of special projects.[19]

To strengthen the relationship between the Collector and Tahsildars, senior officers with controlling capacity and quality of leadership will have to be appointed as Tahsildars. The suggestion for functional instead of territorial distribution of work between Tahsildars and Additional Tahsildars merits considerations.[20] However, the suggestion for a merger of blocks and Tahsils into a single administrative unit and the declaration of the BDO as Additional Tahsildar (Development), far from being

constructive, might create obstacles in dealing with complicated revenue cases.[21]

Citizen's Grievances and Administration

Over the years, several State Governments have devised their own machineries and procedures for redressal of citizen's grievances[22]. However, many States have issued instructions with no follow-up. In Orissa, too, except the Collectorates, the response of other officers to the issue seems to be very poor. Therefore, there is an urgent need for genuine reforms of the grievances machinery.

As regards the existing administrative set up, while the Collector should be designated as the District Grievances Officer with jurisdiction over every department in each district, each department should also have a Grievances Officer with adequate status and seniority. It should be the Collector's responsibility to forward individual complaints and to ensure that they are promptly attended to by the concerned department. He should be empowered to take disciplinary action against any officer for dereliction of duty. Occasional checks by Ministers will, certainly keep the grievances machinery on its toes. However, the primary responsibility for the disposal of applications should be that of the officer who has been delegated powers to take a final decision on it. Too many applications coming to the Ministers or excessive probe and interference in the powers and discretion of officers by Ministers would not be desirable.

Also worthy of consideration is the constitution of the Grievance Committees in all districts to make best use of the service of the non-officials in solving local problems. These Committees should look into the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the citizen's grievances. In this regard, the basic approach of the district officers should be to help people approach the administration for speedy redressal of their grievances.

The Collector should see to it that decisions on the applications or complaints are communicated to the concerned parties as early as possible. If a decision is in the negative, the reasons should be clearly explained to the applicant as far as practicable. In this context, the State Governments should issue appropriate instruc-

tions laying down simple and quick procedures for acknowledgements and registration of appilcations, complaints or petitions; method and time-limit for their disposal; and communication of the final decision. Specific instructions should also be issued for the disposal of applications submitted to the officers and ministers during their inspection tours.

It is encouraging to note that, in the year 1982, A. K. Lakhina, a dynamic and enterprising Collector of Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra, introduced a number of reforms in the collectorate so as to make it responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people. It would be worthwhile if all other States emulated the Ahmednagar experiment in their respective districts.

Lakhina's reforms consist of three important components in order to achieve a more public-oriented administration. While the first component deals with regulation of clerk-public contact, the second ensures easy access to the official records. The third component emphasises on quality control and improvement of the working conditions.[23] As regards the first, the innovations include, among other things, allowing visitors to meet the senior officers directly to relive the clerks' burden; classification of the visitors on the basis of their socio-economic status to ensure speedy disposal of the cases; a carefully planned work-flow based seating arrangement to eliminate unnecessary physical movement of papers and files; and introduction of a counter system to expediate the disposal of certain types of applications requiring immediate attention.

The second component covers reforms like, for instance, introduction of a library-type catalogue of all closed files in the Collectorate's Record Room and elimination of all unwanted papers; display of notice boards, at prominent places, describing procedures for issue of licenses and house sites together with the conditions to be fulfilled by the applicants; distribution of leaflets to the public in vernacular language describing the official rules of procedure for various types of activities; and job-charts for every clerks describing his nature of work and details of procedures.

The third component deals with introduction of quality control cells in each section comprising two or three clerks who meet regularly to review procedures and suggest measures for improv-

ing efficency in work-management; and improvement of the working conditions in a number of ways like complete renovation of all office rooms with water coolers and other modern amenities for both the staff and the visitors.

In tune with the Ahmednagar experiment, a technique of humanistic approach must be developed among the district officers. Old attitudes should give place to the new in the context of the changing needs of the people. Leadership calls for a personal example and a feeling among the officers and subordinates that the Collector or Sub-divisional officer is really interested in them and in the welfare of the public as a whole. It is only then that everyone will give his best for the success of the administration.

In a democratic country like ours, even though rules and regulations cannot be dispensed with, these should be in conformity with the set-goals. In this context, it would be worthy if the attitude of fault-finding was replaced by a more constructive and pragmatic approach to help solve people's problems within the framework of rules. Consequently, this would not only lesson people's apathy, disatisfaction and frustration but also go a long way in the introduction of a better tomorrow.

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4. S. N. Sharma, *The Collector in the Nineteen Sixties in Orissa,* (New Delhi : Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1961) p. 8.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Section 4 of the Police Act, 1861
7. For extensive analysis on the subject see *The Administrator,* special issue on Law and Order (Mussoorie : Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Government

of India) Vol. XXV, No. 1, Spring 1980.

8. The Collector and District Magistrate and Sub-Divisional Officers exercise special powers in respect of the administrative Sections of 1980, 110, 145, 186 and 190 (1) (c) of the Criminal Procedure Code.
9. Sections 1, 7, 1.15, 1.16, 1.17, 14.75, 1.9 and 21.16 of the Police Act also deal with the relationship of the District Magistrate *vis-a-vis* the police.
10. S.K. Sharma, *Deputy Commissioner in Punjab* (New Delhi : Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1971), p. 154.
11. See the *Report of the Study Team on District Administration*, (New Delhi : Administrative Reforms Commission, Government of India, 1967) p. 258.
12. See the *Report of the Administrative Reforms Commission on State Administration*, (New Delhi : Administrative Reforms Commission, Government of India, 1969), p. 85.
13. U. L. Goswami, "The Structure of the Development Administration", *Indian Journal of Public Administration* (New Delhi), vol. 1, No. 2, April-June 1955, p. 110.
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16. V. Eshwar Anand, "Importance of Being The Collector", *The Statesman* (Calcutta), November 7, 1984, p. 8.
17. Ishwar Dayal *et al*, n. 1, p. 48.
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19. *Ibid*.
20. See *Minutes of Discussion in the Collectors' Conference held during* June 25-27, 1981 (Cuttack : Orissa Government Press) p. 8.
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26

URBAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN ORISSA

L.K. Patnaik

History

When Orissa became a separate province in 1936, there were eight Municipalities,[1] in the six districts of Balasore, Cuttack, Ganjam, Koraput, Puri and Sambalpur. At that time two kinds of Municipal laws were in vogue in different areas, namely Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act 1922, in Balasore, Cuttack, Puri and Sambalpur and Madras District Municipal Act, 1920, in Ganjam and Koraput districts. From 1936 to 1950 the Municipalities of portions of Orissa transferred from Bihar and Orissa were governed by Bihar Municipal Act 1922 as amended in 1930, 1931, 1932, 1935, 1936, 1940, 1943, 1949 and the Municipalities of the districts which were transferred from Madras were governed by the Municipalities Act, 1920 as amended in 1946 and 1949.

In 1948, all the princely states merged with the State of Orissa except Mayurbhanj which merged with it in 1949. In these princely states the Municipal Governments[2] were constituted by their own regulations *e.g.* Baripada since 1905, Deogarh since 1912 and Sonepur since 1913. But enforcement of such regulations continued even after the merger. Despite the fact that there were several laws for the governance of the municipalities, they had very limited powers and there was also limited franchise for election to those local bodies. Hence the first task of the state government was to frame a common legislation to bring all the local bodies under one Act. As a result, the Orissa Municipal Act, 1950 was passed to consolidate and amend the laws relating to Municipalities in the state of Orissa. The Act came into force since 16 April 1951[3] and subsequently 19 municipalities were constituted in the state.

The Act provided for the election of Councillors to Municipal Councils on the basis of adult suffrage. For the first time in the history of Orissa, Municipal elections were held in 1951-52. The

Municipal Act 1950 was subsequently amended[4] without any significant change except that of Act XIX of 1951.

As the Municipal Act. 1950 had no provision for the governance of semi-urban areas in Orissa, there were large scale demands from different parts of the State for the formation of NACs with either a new Act or under the existing Municipal Act. Hence, the Government proposed to establish NACs in some selected areas through an amendment (the Act of XIX of 1951) to the existing Municipal Act, and a separate chapter XXX-A was added to the original Act of 1950 for the governance of Notified Areas. As such in Orissa even now there is no separate Act for the governance of the Notified Areas. In 1951 two NAC areas were constituted in Titilagarh and Kantabanji. But with regard to the Notified Area Councils, the Chairman and Councillors were nominated by the Government, the Chairman being invariably sub-divisional officers of the concerned NACs.

Meanwhile, significant changes were made in the rural sector. On the basis of Mehta Committee Report, the Government of Orissa introduced the system of Panchayat Raj from 26 January, 1961. As a consequence there were large-scale demands by the public for further decentralisation in the urban local bodies to the same extent as has been attempted in case of Panchayat Samities. The main reason advanced for such a change was that the Orissa Municipal Act, 1950 which regulated the working of Urban local Bodies in Orissa had ceased to be progressive in matters touching municipal administration in the State.[5]

In response to these demands, the Government of Orissa set up an Administrative Enquiry Committee in 1961 under the Chairmanship of Biswanath Das, one of the former Chief Ministers of Orissa[6] to enquire and make extensive study of the problems about the financial conditions and administration of Urban Local Bodies and to make recommendations to improve them. The Committee gave its report in July 1962.

The Committee made recommendations for decentralisation of power and function of Local Bodies by releasing it from unnecessary restrictions and inadvisable controls imposed and exercised by the state Government. Out of 16 recommendations only 7 were implemented which where insignificant by nature.[7] As no ruling Party wanted to part with the power of control over the

Urban Local Bodies, such amendments proposed for sections 72, 85, 87 (i), 104, 107, 109, 117 (i), 127, 132 (3) have not been implemented until now. As a result, most of the important recommendations of the Das Committee remain in cold storage.[8] It is to be noted that, though on the line of the Das Committee Report the Government amended the Municipal Act, 1950 and added a new clause 393 (A) for the appointment of Director and Deputy Director, the actual implementation of the provision by appointing a Director took place only in the year 1968. The Director works in the secretariat and is also given concurrent Secretarial responsibilities.

Meanwhile, in the Notified Areas, the Government conceded to the demands made by the public for the election of the Notified Area Councillors and Chairman and as a result the Orissa Notified Area Councils (Elected Chairman and Members) Rules 1969[9] was framed for the purpose.

Despite the fact that the Municipal Act 1950 was amended subsequently in 1968, 1972 and 1974[10], the change of Governments in 1967, 1971, and 1974 had impacts on the process and as such there was no significant output.

In pursuance of the recommendation of the Urban-Rural Relation Committee, the Government of Orissa appointed a Municipal Finance Commission in 1974 to study and recommend various financial measures for the Urban Local Bodies. The Commission which submitted its report on 31 May 1975 was more critical of the structure and workings of Municipalities than its preceding Das Committee. The Commission held that :—

> "Though this Act and Rules framed thereunder have been in force since last 25 years, it is found that all provisions in the Act have not been made operative. Some of the provisons are found inadequate, defective and inefficient requiring either modification or replacement. In fact, there has been some amendment and additions of new sections to cater to the needs as demanded by charge of time. But generally speaking, it is consensus of opinion of most of the Councillors, Chairman and others that the Act requires through revision and replacement"[11].

The Commission has recommended 22 measures for implementation including that of direct election of the Chairman of the

Local Bodies. The Commission has also recommended "that the executive powers should be vested in the Chairman; that population limit for the constitution of NAC and Municipality should be 7,500 and 25,000 that the Local Bodies should be divided into 4 classes and the council can only pass no-confidence motion against the Chairman with 3/4th majority. In the process of amendment[12] the Government conceded to the demand of direct election and through the Act of XXII of 1978, made the provision of direct election of the Chairman of Local Bodies. But apart from these no other recommendations were taken into consideration while the amendment was inserted in 1978.

In 1951, 21 Local Bodies[13] were existing in Orissa, but at present there are 96 Local Bodies out of which 27 are Municipalities and 69 are NACs[14].

Despite the fact that the number of Local Bodies has grown from time to time and their powers and resources have been increased, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Decentralised Urban Local Bodies continues to be under scathing criticism. The successive Governments have so far preferred to do patch-works rather than completetely overhaul the Municipal Act, 1950[15].

Structure and Function of the Local Bodies

Though the Local Governments in Urban and Semi-urban areas are classified elsewhere into 5 categories, yet in Orissa, we have only two kinds of Urban and Semi-urban local government structures[16]—(i) the Municipalities for towns and cities, (ii) and Notified Area Councils for the small towns constituted under the Orissa Municipal Act of 1950 as amended from time to time.

The two Local Bodies have, more or less, the same functions and election procedures under the Act. The only difference between these two urban bodies is their size and populatian. According to the Act 1950 Municipalities are constituted in towns where more than 10,000 people live. The N A Cs are formed generally where (a) the population is in between five to ten thousands (b) 50 percent of the adult male population are engaged in other than agriculture and (c) Density of population is more than 500 per square mile. As such in Orissa, Notified Area

Councils are constituted for the areas where the urbanisation process has started but not manifested itself enough to constitute a Municipality.

Municipality

The Municipalities in Orissa are constituted under the Orissa Municipal Act of 1950. Though the Municipalities are classified or graded according to their population and sources of income or both in other states, yet in Orissa no such gradation list exists under the provisions of the Act. According to Section 7 of the Act the State Government may by notification abolish any Municipality. But no municipality has been abolished since its inception under the Act in Orissa.

The Municipalities are managed by the respective Municipal Councils. The Council consists of councillors who are elected from among the voters of the respective wards. The town is divided into several wards (minimum 11 and maximum 30) and one Councillor is elected from each ward.

In any Municipality, the State Government may, by notification, reserve seats for members of the S. C. and S. T. provided that the total number of seats reserved in any Municipality shall not exceed 3. The term of Municipal Council is for 4 years, the Government may supersede the Municipalities on their proved inefficiency.

The Municipalities are managed by a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. The Chairman[17] and the Vice-Chairman are elected by the members of the Council by a majority vote at the first meeting of the Council. The Chairman is the head of the Council. He convenes the meetings of the Municipal Council, presides over the meeting and executes the decisions of the Council. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Municipality discharges all his functions. The Orissa Municipal (Amendment) Act 1984 provides that no-confidence motion against the Chairman shall be passed within one year from the date of his election or appointment. This seems to be a safeguard against the misuse of powers of the Councillors under party influence.

Each Municipality has one Executive Officer appointed by the Government to look after the day-to-day office administration.

The Executive Officer also acts as a liason officer between the Government and the Municipality. There is one Health Officer and Engineer also appointed by the Government for each Municipality.

The Committee of the Council

The Orissa Municipal Act provides for the appointment of the Committee by the Council to assist it in the discharge of its duties. It may appoint any number of Committees but the appointment of the Committees on the following subjects is a must (a) Finance (b) Public Health Hospitals and dispensaries (c) Public works, (d) Education and (e) any other spacial subject. However, in a municipality, where provision for supply of pipe water has been made, a Water Works Committee should be constituted. Soon after the Council takes over the charges, it forms various Committees. A Committee shall consist of not less than 3 and not more than 6 Councillors. The Act provides that any person who is not a Councillor but in the opinion of the Councillors possesses special qualifications for serving in a Committee, can also be nominated to the Committee (Section 59). However the number of such persons who are so nominated should not exceed 1/3 of the total number of the members of such committees. The Act further provides that the Chairman or Vice-Chairman shall be the President of these Committees. The Act also provides that the Councillors at a meeting may delegate to any such Committee any of their powers and duties or withdraw all or any of the powers and duties delegated to them.

Functions

The Municipality undertakes a large number of measures in order to provide a better standard of living for the inhabitants of the town. The functions of the Municipalities may be divided into obligatory and optional functions. Obligatory functions are those which the Municipality must perform and optional functions are those which the Municipality may perform.

The obligatory functions which may be conveniently grouped under public health, public safety and conveniences, medical

relief and public works include water supply, road cleaning, street lighting, public vaccination, establishing and mantaining public hospitals and dispensaries, establishing and maintaining primary education, town planning, market places, slaughter houses, drains, public latrines and registration of births and deaths and marriages.

The optional functions generally include laying out new public streets, constructing and maintaining public parks, gardens, libraries, secondary education, transport, administration, holding fairs, exhibitions etc.

Sources of Income

The State Government authorises the Municipality to raise its own finance through tax, fees, toll and by any other method. The sources of the income of the Municipality may be classified into the following heads :—

1. Taxes—Direct, Indirect, Terminal tolls;
2. Fees and Fines;
3. Profits from utility sources;
4. Government Grants; and
5. Loan—Governmental and Non-Governmental.

Control by the Government

While the Municipalities are free and autonomous in the conduct of their affairs, they are non-sovereign in their character, and subject to the Control of the State Government. In general, the Governmental control assumes five forms; Legislative, Judicial, Administrative, Financial and Control through personnel.

The State legislature controls them not only in creating, constituting and abolishing municipalities but also by making, amending and repealing laws concerning them. The judiciary controls them by interpreting the laws and adjudging their validity. Both these types of control come into play only occasionally, but it is the administrative control which is exercised at every step. The nature of administrative supervision and control exercised by the State Government departments connected with Urban Local Governments, include steps which are indirect and less vigorous such as advice and information, giving directions (Section 387 of

the Orissa Municipal Act 1950) calling for information and reports, (Sec. 397) review of local action, conditional grants-in-aid etc. whereas others are more direct and drastic and take the form of annulment of local government's decisions (Sec. 398), action on default (Sec. 400) suspension and removal of elected members (Sec. 44) and dissolution and suspension of the Council (Sec. 401 and 402).

The financial control exercised by the State Government over Municipalities extends to the controlling over taxation, expenditure, loans and borrowings and finally controlling through the appointment of auditors (Sec. 113). The State Government according to the Act has the power to abolish, suspend or reduce the rate of any tax or taxes levied by the Municipality (Sec. 131-A), make rules and regulations for the application of Municipal fund and can examine the budget (Sec. 108) and even can return the budget to the Municipality for necessary alterations and modifications (Sec. 109).

Apart from these above controls, the State Government also controls the day-to-day Municipal administration through the appointment of personnels, such as Executive Officers, Health Officers and Engineers in the Municipalities. This power helps in tightening the grip of control through the Government personnel.

The Government of Orissa has created a Directorate of Urban Development since 1968. The Directorate is headed by an officer of the Indian Administrative Services and he enquires into the complaints against the Municipalities. He advises the Government and exercises control over Municipalities on behalf of the Government. The Municipalities and Notified Area Councils are kept under the direct supervision. At the local level, the District Magistrates are provided with enormous powers to control the Municipalities.

Relationship Between Union Government and Municipal Bodies

It is true that the Municipalities are the creation of the State Government, which as a parent body enjoys a special relationship with the Municipalities. It is equally a fact that, constitutionally

speaking, the Central Government has no relationship with cities and towns *per se*. However, the needs of development have led the National Government to forge links between its own administrative apparatus and that of the Municipalities. Unlike the State Government, the Central Government does not exercise supervision and control over Municipal Bodies. Instead its role is one of standard setting, coordination of local Government programmes and policies, assistance for major and important financial and technical projects, conducting research into different problems on notional basis, inspiring, invigorating, guiding, assisting and strengthening Municipal administration to perform the various local functions as effectively as possible.[18]

Urban Politics

The most controversial aspect of urban politics is that of the supervision and control of the State Government over Municipalities. The organisation of Municipalities in Orissa, follows the British Indian Model of subordination to the State Government. Despite the increase in number of growing urban local bodies from time to time the Municipalities and N A Cs wield exceedingly limited power, and the State Government in Orissa, as elsewhere, has enormous power to intervene vertically in such limited jurisdictions. A study of the provisions of the Orissa Municipal Act 1950 reveals that the attitude of the State Government towards urban local bodies is characterised by suspicion and distrust. As such, time and again, the Municipalities in the State have been superseded by the Government on some pretext or other, and such drastic actions on the part of the State Government can aptly be described in these words : "Where spur and rein is needed the Government has been given the use of a pole-axe."

However, the state control over Local Bodies is necessary and exercised in almost every country in varying degrees.

The reasons are :—

1. Local authorities are legal creations of the State.
2. They govern only a tiny part of the State, and in the interest of uniform development, coordination by the State Government becomes essential.

3. The Local authorities cannot command so much technical skill as the State or Union Government and have only limited experience. The Government, on the other hand, has in its employment a permanent body of professionnal experts who can bring to the notice of the Local authorities improved methods of doing things successfully tried elsewhere.
4. Financial assistance, in whatever form it may be, implies control. Local Bodies of all kinds depends a lot on the grants of the Government which obviously must have power to ensure that the money so granted is properly and usefully utilized.

Thus the object of State supervision and control is to increase the efficiency of the Local Bodies. While supervision and control must secure the proper performance of the duties entrusted to local authorities, it must, at the same time, concern itself with educational and technical support and training services to their staff. In other words, it should not acquire negative content so as to restrict the initiative, discretion or assumption of responsibility on the part of the Local Bodies, but should be given a positive content helping the local authorities to avoid pitfalls and mistakes, strengthening their self-confidence and enabling them to assume growing responsibilities.

In Orissa, the State Government's supervision and control over local bodies are almost absolute and mostly negative in character. Despite the considerable improvements in the Act over the years the obnoxious system of supersession still continues. The control and supervision becomes more real when the two opposite parties hold office in a Municipality and the State Government respectively. Thus, "When the same political party is in power both at the State and the Municipality, the municipal authority may tend to have the appearance of autonomy, but when the groups at the two levels are opposite, the appearance of autonomy tends to evaporate and the predominance of vertical authority and influence becomes clear. In these circumstances the State level actors play the notorious part of influencing the outcome in the Municipal area by frequent intervention. This can be illustrated from practice. During the period between 1978-81, the Municipalities of Cuttack, Berhampur and Puri were supervised by the Government, where the Chairmen were from the opposition. Thus one is apt to conclude that the progressive reduction of Municipal

powers and regressive steps of supersession appear to be a result of needs of political actors at the State level to take over important power of patronage in urban politics.

Another important aspect of urban politics is the relationship between the Chairman, the popular representative and the Executive Officer appointed by the Government of Orissa under the framework of Orissa Municipal Act 1950. The Chairman is the focal point of urban local set up and as such, he is expected to be the people's voice within the decentralised sector of administration. But in Orissa, the Chairmen either try to impose themselves on the administration or neatly surrender to it thereby tilting the balance of local administration in either case. Sometimes the Chairman becomes over-ambitious or enthusiastic and in the process tries to dominate officers in the Council; some times also officers by-pass the popular representatives and impose themselves on the administration. Thus, in either case begins the hitch between the Chairman and the Executive Officer leading to the administrative disruption which becomes a good excuse for the supersession of the Council. For example, the attempts by the Chairman and the Executive Officer of the Municipal Council of Puri, during 1978-79 to dominate each other ultimately resulted in the supersession of the Municipality.

In the absence of the provision in the Act—"that the executive authority of urban bodies shall vest in the Chairman and it shall be his duty to have the resolutions of the urban local bodies implemented through the executive officer", the struggle between the two would continue and the very purpose of the decentralisation process shall continue to be defeated.

Hence, it is our considered opinion that Section 87(1) of the Orissa Municipal Act may be recast on the lines of the provisions made under Section 9(1) and 19(1) of the Orissa Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad Act providing "the executive authority shall be vested in the Chairman".

Further, the frequent intrusion of party politics in local administration has posed serious problems in the smooth functioning of these urban democratic structures. A large section of the public does not favour political parties getting themselves involved in the activities of the Local Governments. As, these bodies have to deal with strictly local problems, the intrusion of party politics

has no relevance and can only hamper local activities. The necessity of party activities arises only at the State and national levels where policy making decisions are being taken. Local functions are so simple and basic that there is hardly any scope for different opinions to prevail. As such the main interest of these parties in capturing seats in the urban local bodies, is to advance their party interests in the local areas and use them as springboards to jump to the state and national level politics.

Moreover, the Government seems to have less regard for the efficiency of urban local bodies. Nor is it bothered about their effectiveness in the present set up. It only seems to wake up at times only on political considerations. As such, despite, growing demands for the thorough revision and replacement of the Orissa Municipal Act of 1950, no ruling party took active interest in bringing about a change. On the other hand, the ruling parties have always taken interest in curbing the powers of the Local Bodies and tightening its control, and that too by punitive methods.[19]

One of the most interesting features is that, probably the Government of Orissa is equating effectiveness with the increase in the number of urban local bodies. But growth or development, though it contributes partially to the effectiveness of the process, cannot be equated either with efficiency or effectiveness of the process. Hence, the view of bureaucrats that the increase in the number of local bodies speaks of the effectiveness of the decentralised process is erroneous.[20]

Another significant factor of urban politics in Orissa is that leadership and management have been taken over by the higher income groups,[21] and the educated citizens who do not think high of these local bodies are not, in large numbers attracted towards them.

On the whole, the deficiency in the organisation and working of the personnel system of the Urban Local Government, and lack of supervision of the State Government along with the carefree but competitive attitudes of the state level political actors have contributed to the ineffectiveness of the urban local bodies in Orissa.

In conclusion, to make the Urban bodies more effective, the State Government should pay adequate attention to solve some

of the important problems that have remained hitherto unattended. First, the power of supersession of urban local bodies should be rarely used and that too only in extreme cases of delinquency and default after giving essential instruction and reasonable period of notice. The aim should be to reform and improve the council from within by infusing greater enthusiasm for self-government and civic responsibility among the inhabitants of the civic community rather than to pronounce capital sentence on them.

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1. The Berhampur Municipality was the oldest Municipality of Orissa which was constituted in 1855. The other Municipalities were Kendrapada and Jaipur (1869), Cuttack (1876), Balasore (1877), Puri (1881), Sambalpur (1883) and Parlakhimundi (1886). The percentage of population and area of these Municipalities to the total population and area of Orissa were 1.83 and 9.19 respectively.
2. 9 Municipalities and 2 Notified Area Councils were functioning in these areas.
3. The Act came into force in Cuttack, Jaipur, Bhawanipatna, Puri, Berhampur, Talcher, Balasore, Parlakhemundi, Dhenkanal, Sambalpur, Baripada, Keonjhar, Kendrapada, Bolangir, Deogarh, Sonapur and Sundargarh. The Act came into force in Baragarh and Jeypore on 28 August 1951.
4. The Municipal Act of 1950 was amended by the Act XIX of 1951 Act XXX of 1951, Act XII of 1953, Act III of 1954, Act I of 1956 and Act XVI of 1957.
5. Report of Orissa Local Body Urban Administration Enquiring Committee, Orissa Government Press, Cuttack, 1963 p. 17.
6. Resolution No. 10120--L. S. G. dated 14th Oct. 1961.
7. L. K., Patnaik, Input and Output Components of Decentralisation Process with Special Reference to Orissa (Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Berhampur University, 1981) p. 239.
8. Report of the State Municipal Financial Commission Orissa (1975) Urban Development Department, Part I, p. 9.
9. Published by Notification No. 9136 Legis. 77/69. V. D. dated 20th May, 1969.
10. Act XX of 1968 Act XXIII of 1972 and Act IV of 1974.

11. Report of the State Municipal Financial Commission 1975 Part I p. 140.
12. Amendment by the Act XXII of 1978 which came to force since 26th July 1978.
13. 19 Municipalities and 2 N. A. C. s.
14. During the period of 1951 to 1961, 24 Local Bodies and during the period of 1961 to 1971 22 more Local Bodies and 1971 to 1981 24 more Local Bodies have been constituted.
15. L. K. Patnaik, n. 7, p. 244.
16. There is not a single Corporation in Orissa, although 4 cities *viz.* Cuttack, Rourkela, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur, have requisite population to be declared as Corporations. Of these four, Rourkela has two N A Cs. Apart from the corporations there are no Town Area Committees and Cantonment Boards in Orissa.
17. Orissa Municipal (Councillors) Election (Amendment) Rules, 1978 has provided for the direct election of the Chairman. However the Orissa Municipal (Amendment) Act 1984 has amended the procedure of direct election to the Chairman.
18. The Gazette of India (Administration and Public Welfare) Ministry of Education and Social Welfare Government of India, 1978, Vol. IV, p. 261.
19. In Orissa almost all Municipalities were superseded. One of the Local bodies like Cuttack has been under supersession for more than 18 years, out of 27 years after independence.
20. Most of the bureaucrats of decentralised sectors in Orissa had this view. The author ascertained this by interview with them.
21. More than 85% of the Urban Councillors (during the seventies) are from the richer section of the society.
22. About 74% of Councillors of Orissa were either matriculates or below matriculate in the seventies.

RURAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE IN ORISSA : INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE FOR FUNCTIONAL DYNAMICS

N. Hazary

Panchayats were introduced in Orissa in 1952. The Panchayat, the lowest and the most important unit of Local Self-Government and development has failed to deliver the goods. It has failed as an effective organ of people's power and citizen-participation. In a study made in 1979 (author's Ph. D. Dissertation) it was found that the villagers were so allergic to the political institution in the form of the present panchayat that they were not keen to send their best leaders as the ward-members and there was almost no contest for this office. *A re-examination of the basic assumptions on which the system claims democratic legitimacy is the need of the hour.*

The panchayat has failed to mobilise human resources for development. In fact all the political institutions like panchayat Samiti, Zilla Parishad.[1] State Government and the Union Government have failed to mobilise the human resources (man-power is the greatest resource of a nation) for development and mobilisation of human resources is the principal way through which the economy of this poverty-stricken country can be redeemed.

91.6%[2] of people in Orissa live in villages. The village is an integrated and viable economic, social, cultural and political unit. Every village is substantially a world by itself. It is only the village that can be the effective organ of people's power. The village is the touchstone of every single thing that we do in relation to rural areas. It is the growth centre. We disagree with the view of Dr. Shriram Maheswari when he says, "... a village is too small an area to provide, on a sustained basis capable leadership, which indeed holds the key to the success of any institution."[3] The village as a socio-economic-political unit has successfully continued to exist through the vicissitudes of the centuries. On a hundred and one questions the village

takes its own decisions and the villages in the country are progressing due to substantial contribution made by the village towards development. *The village can provide sustained capable leadership if political, economic and sôcial life is rationally organised.*

With co-operative community endeavour a village can undergo metamorphosis. There is no limit to the height that it can reach. But the will to do must be there. And that is political. From ancient times the traditional panchayat had been representing that political will. But during the British period there was a deliberate systematic attempt to destroy that will by transferring ownership of land from the people to the zamindars. Thereby the cohesion of the village was thrown over-board.

After independence panchayats were constituted as units of self-government and development. But the whole thing started at the wrong end in Orissa. *To approach the goal of rural economic development through the agency of the existing village panchayats is an exercise in frustration.* The present panchayat of cluster-villages in Orissa is alien to the historical consciousness of the rural community. It has never been a functional and physically integrated total system. It is an unnatural unit. It does not correspond to any social unit. It is artificially contrived. From time immemorial village was the seat of panchayat. Villagers for whom the village is their world, find it impossible to identify themselves with the present panchayat. It is obviously impossible for Orissa villagers to govern themselves in basic units of about 10 to 12 villages. We cannot believe that the law was written with the intention that they govern themselves. Certainly it is difficult for villagers to know and trust leaders from another village other than their own. It is in Orissa that the Panchayat unit is one of the largest.

Writing about the present panchayat, Bailey remarks with insight, "It seems indeed that the people of Mohanpur regard the statutory, panchayat not so much as an organ of local self-government, but as a means of liaison between the actual organ of self-government...the traditional council and the Administration. The new panchayat is at the same time a means of manipulating the administration, where that is possible, and of keeping officials at arm's length and, most of all, of preventing secondary

institutions of power in the village from becoming entangled with party politics. Meanwhile the traditional council continues to run the village."[5]

There are more than 2,00,000 panchayats in 5,33,000 villages of India, or one panchayat for every 2.6 villages. The size of the village panchayat, in terms of average number of villages and population, varies from one state to another. The number of villages in a panchayat being as high as 22 in Himachal Pradesh and 10 in Orissa, the average in Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab[6] and U.P. is between 1 to 2 villages. There are approximately as many panchayats for as many villages. Thus in these states panchayats are village based. Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, however, club together a number of contiguous villages for purposes of constituting the Grama Panchayat. Speaking on the problem Balwantray Mehta while addressing the seminar on Panchayat Raj, Planning and Democracy organised under the auspices of the Rajasthan University in December, 1964 said, "There has been some sort of confusion regarding what is the village panchayat. In several places, five, six or seven, and in one of two states two or three or even more villages jointly have one panchayat ... in one or two states we find ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty and so on. So it differs from place to place according to the developing situation of the area. We have yet to find a common definition of the village panchayat as such and I am not in a hurry to give a term for the whole country as such. "In terms of population, Kerala[7] tops the list, with nearly 12,000 people for panchayat, Orissa comes second with 5,800, and Bihar third with 3,240, U.P. has the lowest population coverage with 755.[8]

The natural interest of the villager to develop his village could not be exploited in Orissa because panchayats have been constituted with ten or more villages. Writing about the Vietnam village Do Trong Chu writes "Village is an organized unit encompassing a small area in which people are related to each other by a natural interest and common responsibility. It still remains the basic population unit of the nation."[9] It is also true of an Indian village. The village arena is more important and more valued, having a legitimacy and a moral quality, which is lacking

in the present panchayat arena. The village has this quality because it involves not merely political interaction but also social interaction. The village arena is a way of life.

The village remained the unchanging backbone of Indian life. As, K.M. Panikkar notes "It is the one foundation on which .. India has been reared."[10] From ancient times village in India has been the axis of administration. Prof. Venketrangaiya writes .."from times immemorial down to a little more than a century ago the village was the only unit of local self-government in the country, that every village had a panchayat of its own to supply the inhabitants with all community services."[11]

The objective in setting up panchayats was to secure direct citizen participation for assessing the felt needs of the rural community. It was to set up an agency in the village which represents the community as a whole and can assume responsibility and initiative for developing the resources of the village both human and physical and provide the necessary leadership. The village alone can be an instrument of expression of the local people's will in regard to the local development. *It is in the village that the spirit of the community dwells. The village is the critical and central variable for all important tasks of economic development and social change.* It is at the village level that the efforts of the people can be mobilised and there is the largest scope for securing community action. The village is also to determine priorities in relation to the needs of the people as well as to secure cheap and speedy justice and administration.

The local government is a well settled instrument of political education. By constituting a panchayat in every village the effect of decision making in the local council can be more easily perceived by everyone in the community. "As such functions are performed within a restricted locality, each person sees for himself how the local tasks are being performed by the local council. He develops the habit of judging the elected representative by his performance rather than by the promises he makes. Since every thing is apparently occurring before the eyes of the people a keener debate and discussion on affairs of local import ensures, which chastens and educates them."[12] Thus local government keeps alive interest in public affairs and political life. It cultivates civic consciousness and acts as a school of

citizenship.

Being closest to the people, local government is most easily accessible to them and people can generally expect to exert influence to a greater degree on a Panchayat of their own village than on the remote panchayat of cluster villages. As Prof. Harold, J. Laski remarks : "For administration from without lacks the vitalizing ability to be responsive to local opinion." A panchayat located in a village is expected to be responsive to local public opinion. People's problems and grievances can be immediately attended to.

By having a panchayat in every village the people will be given a chance to solve their day-to-day problems through the village panchayat. It will create capacity for self-help and will provide an outlet for competent and public spirited persons of the village to render social service to the community. It will facilitate active participation of local people in administration of the affairs of the community and thus will enlist their co-operation and support. Common endeavour will lead to corporate and community life.

Community development can be real only when the community understands its problems, realises its responsibilities, exercises the necessary powers through its chosen representatives and maintains a constant and intelligent vigilance on local administration, remarks the Ashok Mehta Committee on panchayati Raj Institutions.

In case of all social services there are certain activities which can be best performed only by an agency on the spot. We may take the examples of education and health of villagers. They have no money to establish a school and appoint teachers. But they are better placed than the government, to supervise the functioning of the school. Being present on the spot, they can be a constant and healthy check on teachers. Similarly, the government has the resources to set up a hospital, appoint a doctor and supply medicine. But it is difficult for it to ensure that the doctor is doing his duty sincerely. This can be ensured much more effectively by the villagers concerned. This is perhaps true of many other developmental activities at the village level.

Under the above circumstances, it is our considered opinion

that, there should be radical changes in the structural mechanics of local self-government so that it will lead to functional dynamics. Apart from the Zilla Parishad at the district level, *there should be three tiers of self government in Panchayati Raj within the block.*

The lowest and basic unit ought to be the *Panchayat* which should be constituted in every village.

Table 1. Distribution of villages according to population (1971) in Orissa.[13]

10,000 and over	5,000 to 9,999	2,000 to 2,999	1000 to 1,999	500 to 999	Less than 500	Total
2	22	830	3,546	8,821	33,771	46,992

The next and the second tier could be the *Sahajogi Panchayat*[14] replacing the present panchayat of cluster-villages. If the population of a village coincided with that of a *Sahajogi Panchayat* the panchayat of the village is to act simultaneously as the *Sahajogi Panchayat*. The *Sahajogi Panchayat* shall supervise and co-ordinate the activities of the panchayats with a view to increasing the efficiency of administration of public services. The third tier is to be the present *Panchayat Samiti* constituted at the Block level.

By recognising a Panchayat in every village the state shall provide legitimacy and primacy to the power-structure based on popular sanction in the village. In the absence of that, the traditional informal panchayat has remained dormant and attenuated. It has fallen into disuse and decayed. It is on its way to withering away. We have to retrieve whatever good is in it. We have a long way to go and time is not on our side.

The panchayat at the village level can have five panches.[15] In case of bigger villages, the number may vary from seven to eleven. *They are to be directly elected (not from wards but from the whole village) by the Grama Sabha which consists of all the adults of the village who have completed eighteen years of age,* Whether the Panch is to be elected from the ward or by the whole village provides scope for further probing. There shall be reservation of seats for the S. C. and S. T. proportionate to their population. Election should be done on the basis of free

will of the villagers, through secret ballot and not through show of hands. Unless the sociological and economic situation changes, even election may not bring in the poor man's representative. The panches are to elect by secret ballot from among themeselves the *Gramani*[16] who is to discharge the duties of a presiding officer and who should be in charge of house-keeping activities of the village.[17] The office of the *Gramani* cannot be rejected off-hand on the ground that it may revive feudalism through the backdoor. As the office is not to be hereditary but elective, there is no cause for misgiving on this score. In any given social situation, in any government, right from the national to the local level we find a leader like the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, Chairman Zilla Parishad, Chairman Panchayat Samiti, Sarpanch etc. Then there is no reason why the village, the basic unit of democracy, development and administration should be denied a leader. By having a leader we can reinforce authority and fix up responsibility.[18]

In today's village there is no single point of responsibility to which either the government or the people can look for reference. The system is not functioning effectively because there is no point of responsibility. Prafulla Mahanti, hailing from Orissa, describing the political life in his village observes, "There is total anarchy in the true sense in our village life. There is no headman or controlling authority who sets out rules for the pattern of behaviour."[19] The village suffers from lack of a sense of direction. *The locus of authority remains indeterminate in the village. There is chaos and confusion and no sense of direction. The village needs a headman By that we can reinforce authority and fix up responsibility. The headman or Gramani will be the point of reference both for the people and the Government.* The Gramani is to act in consultation with the panches. In fact all decisions are to be arrived at collectively and by consensus.

The five panches (Gramani is also a panch) are to elect from amongst themselves the necessary number of *Pradhans* (present day Ward-Members) to the *Sahajogi Panchayat* by secret ballot. Whether the *pradhans* should be elected by the panches or the people and whether they should be chosen from amongst the panches or outside the panches should be further studied. The term ward-member is English in origin and creates an atmosphere

of artificiality. *Pradhan* which means *chief* will be much more meaningful and will find ready acceptance among the rural folk. It will add naturalness and prestige to the office and the representative's office will find congenial soil to grow. Hence in the place of Ward Member the term *Pradhan* may be used.

The president of the *Sahajogi Panchayat* may be known as *Sarpanch.* The Sarpanch should continue to be directly elected. The presiding officer of the Panchayat Samiti may be known as *Adhikari.* He is to be directly elected by the people. The Chairman of the Zilla Parishad can be called *Adhyakshya*.

To safeguard the impartiality of election at the lowest level scrutiny of nomination, voting, counting, declaration of result *etc.* should be done under the supervision of a government officer like the primary school teacher, nominated by the panchayat officer who is stationed at the sub-divisional level. Election can be done in the school or (where there is no school) in the community hall.

Term of office[20] *of the Panchayat* can be one year. In the author's village Buddhagram right from the year 1961, elections by secret ballot have been held to elect the five panchas. All the adults who are 18 years old are the voters. Subsequent elections were held in the years 1966, 1973, 1977, 1979 and 1980. From experience it has been found that a five years term simply does not work. Sometime after the elections, people lose confidence in their representatives and the representatives themselves become doubtful of the genuiness of the popular mandate. The mandate gets stale. They lose credibility. They become hesitant to take strong steps as they are unsure of the citizen's support that their actions would elicit. But annual elections have brought in a refreshing change in the attitude of both the electors and the elected in Buddhagram. The backing of the citizens remains vigorous and continuous and the representatives feel confident of citizen support to carry on development works. In case the citizens are not forthcoming with their support, the representatives with justifiable confidence, challenge them as to why the electors have been found wanting in expressing their support, when they chose their representatives just the other day. It has the desired effect and brings the people to a reasonable frame of mind. They come out to co-operate.

The short term of one year is not inimical to stability and progress, because from experience it has been found that, by and large, the same people who are the natural leaders of the community come to power time and again. The incumbents have no reason to feel insecure because of the shortness of the term, due to the fact that in the village situation to be a representative, is more in the nature of public service than that of exercise of power. The reality is that some enlightened representative have been extremely reluctant to shoulder this heavy responsibility of keeping the community going towards progress. When all has been said, there can be further studies and debates regarding the term of office of the panchayat.

The term of the *Sahajogi Panchayat, the Panchayat Samiti the Zilla Parishad should be five years and elections*[21] *to all the* levels should be held simultaneously. The present term of three years is insufficient for one to comprehend the problems of the people, to understand the mechanics of the organization and the dynamics of the processes of power and to tackle them effectively. A short term is inimical to both stability and progress. It causes a sense of insecurity among the incumbents. It also discourages people from accepting the office. But what should be the length of the term also needs further probing.

If two-thirds of the voters in the Gram Sabha pass a non-confidence motion against any panch then he should stand recalled. The Panchayat is generally to carry its business in the open assembly of the villagers. The Grama Sabha is to debate all matters relating to the village : rules helpful to the entire community are to be framed, and the offenders are to be punished through regular trials and judgements. The Grama Sabha is to discuss and take decision on the economic, social, cultural and political issues pertaining to the community.

Gandhiji, writing of village self-rule said,[22] "My idea of village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbours for its vital wants, and yet inter-dependent for among others in which dependence is a necessity. Thus the village's first concern will be to grow its own food crops and cotton for its cloth. It should have a reserve for its cattle recreation and playground for adults and children ..The village will maintain a village theatre, school and public hall. It will have its own

waterworks ensuring a clean water supply, This can be done through controlled wells or tanks. Education will be compulsory upto the final basic course. As far as possible, every activity will be conducted on co-operative basis . The government of the village will be conducted by the panchayat of five persons annually elected by adult villagers, male and female, possessing minimum prescribed qualification. These will have all the authority and jurisdiction required."

REFERENCES

1. The Orissa Grama Panchayat Act was passed in 1948. The Orissa Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad Act was passed in 1659, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads were introduced on 26.1.1961. But Zilla Parishads were abolished on 9.4.1967. See Orissa Gazette No. 363, Cuttack 4.4.1967. In March 1978 the concerned Minister gave a statement in the Orissa Legislative Assembly that the State Government was thinking of reviving Zilla Parishads.
2. Census of India, 1972, p. 19.
3. Shriram Maheswari, *Local Government in India* (Orient Longmans, Delhi, 1971), p. 86.
4. See H.D. Malaviya, *Village Panchayats in India*, All India Congress Committee (New Delhi, 1956), pp. 145-185.

   A.R. Desai observes, "The Village Committee, representing the village community which was the de-facto owner of the village land distributed this land among the peasant families in the form of holdings. Each holding was cultivated by the peasant family by means of the collective labour of its members The peasant family enjoyed a traditional hereditary right to possess and cultivate its holding from generation to generation."

A.R. Desai, *Social Background of Indian Nationalism* (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1966), p. 8.

Regarding the mutual relations of these families, Shelvankar remarks . "They were subject to various collective restrictions and entitled to various collectively managed services. The 'municipal' services, watch and ward etc., the enjoyment of rights in common grazing grounds and woodlands, the necessary co-

operation for purposes of arranging irrigation and water supply etc., the organization of defence against marauders as well as to protect the land and crops from wild animals, pests and stray cattle... all these urgent and necessary conditions of village life imposed on the peasantry a regime of co-operation that was a bar to the growth of sharply antagonistic or irreconcilable private claims. Above all, there was the ever present necessity of meeting, collectively as a rule, the revenue-rent demands of the overlord of the village, whether he was the ruler in his own rights or only an intermediary." K.S. Shelvankar *The Problem of India*, 1940, p. 95.

Writing about the ancient Indian Communities Karl Marx observes, "these Small and extremely ancient Indian Communities...The constitution of these Communities varies in different parts of India. In those of the simplest form, the land is tilled in common, and the produce divided among the members". Karl Marx, *On India*, p. 391.

"In the Hindu period, the land belonged to the village community, and was never regarded as the property of the King. The state had merely a right to a share, always paid in kind. Under the Muslems, the existing tenures and tax system were adopted with some modifications. "observe Wadia and Merchant. P.A. Wadia and K.P. Merchant, *Our Economic Problem* p. 234 Also see D. Chottopadyaya. "Village Communities" in *Rural Sociology in India*, Ed. A.R. Desai, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1969, pp. 155-166.

5 F.G. Bailey, *Politics and Social Change, Orissa in 1959* (The University of California Press, Berkeley, 1963), p. 96.

6. There are 13,840 Panchayats in 21,462 villages, See B.S. Khanna, 'Some empirical observation in the Punjab context" in *Panchayati Raj, Planning and Democracy* (eds.), M.V. Mathur and Iqbal Narain, Asia, Bombay, 1969.

7. In Kerala there are only 24 villages out of a total of 1573 which have a population of less than 1,000.

8. *See* Shriram Maheswari, n. 2, pp. 84-85.

9. Do Trong Chu (Consul, Republic of Vietnam), Letter to the Editor, *The Statesman*, 2 May 1961.

10. K.M. Panikkar, *A Survey of Indian History*. (Asia, 1954), p. 9.

11. M. Venkatrangaiya, *The Village in the Structure of Local Government*, (Andhra University, 1942). p. 334.
12. Shriran Maheswari, n. 2, p. 5-6.
13. India 1974, p. 15.
14. In West Bengal where there is the 4-tier panchayati system, a Grama Sabha is constituted for a population of 750 to 1500. The Grama Sabha elects a Grama Panchayat consisting of 9 to 15 members with a president who is known as Adhyaksha. The total number of Grama Panchayats in the state is 19,649. The higher tier is the Anchal Panchayat whose number is 2,925. An Anchal Panchayat is comprised of some contiguous Grama Sabhas. It consists of members elected by its Grama Panchayats on the basis of one-member for every 250 members of a Grama Sabha we are of the view that the members should have been elected by the Grama Sabha themselves and not by the Grama Panchayats. The principle of indirect election should be discarded and direct election adopted as far as possible). The President of Anchal Panchayat is called Pradhan. The next tier is Anchalik Parishad and its number is 325. Anchalik Parishads consist of the Pradhans within the Block, one Adhyaksha from each Anchal Panchayat, M.Ps and M.L.As., elected from a constitutency comprising the Block, two women and two persons belonging to backward community. The next tier is the Zilla Parishad whose number is 15. It consists of the presidents of the Anchalik Parishads of the Blocks within the district, two Adhyakshas from each sub-division, M.Ps. and M.L.A.s elected from a constituency comprising the district, the Chairman of the municipality, the president of the district school board and two women. *The Statesman*. (Calcutta), 26 September 1964.
15. The age old principle of a panchayat was 'Panch Parameswar' i.e. 'God speaks through the Five' which in other words meant that a unanimous decision of the panchayat was respected as the verdict of God.
16. The Rig-Veda mentions that the village was headed by the Gramani, the chief of the village. The Mahabharata says that the village was the fundamental unit of Administretion;

and as its head the Gramani, who was its leader and chief spokesman.

See S.C. Dube, *Indian Village* (Allied, Bombay), 1967, p. 2.

Manu calls the village official Gramik (In Ramayana he is called Gramani). This Gramik was responsible for village administration and Manu has indicated his functions as collection of king's dues from the village inhabitants. The next higher official, the one in charge of the administration of ten villages, to whom the Gramik had to report was called Dashi. This man had to report to another official responsible for twenty villages, called Bimshanti. Over him used to be an official responsible for hundred villages called Shat Gramadhipati, and above him was yet another over one thousand villages called Sahasra-Gramadhipati.

See Manava Dharma Shastra Slokas 3,4,5 and 6 in H.D. Malaviya, *Village Panchayat in India,* All India Congress Committee (New Delhi, 1956), p. 46.

In Kautilya's Arthasasthra he is called Gramika (Ibid., p. 17), in Shukranitisara he is called Gramaneta (Ibid. p. 82) in Pratihara times he is called Gramapati (Ibid. p. 84).

17. The Administrative Reforms Commission, 1970, observes, "The outlay of a village Panchayat being small in amount, it will not be necessary to have a whole time secretary. The Chairman himself can manage the office and be paid a small annual allowance to meet incidential expenses". Administrative Reforms Commission, op. cit. p. 147. However, it is not necessary to pay an annual allowance to the Chairman or Gramani. He can draw money from the village common fund for expenses towards house-keeping activities as and when necessary. It is not desirable to make the office payable, as that may attract undesirable people to the office. Only people having public spirit, coming voluntarily, can do justice to the office.

18. David Apter's (author of *"The Politics of Modernisation*) analysis like any other structural-functional one, involves the search for the functional and structural requisities of government. The two functional requisities are seen as the provision of INFORMATION and the presence of 'practical monopoly of *coercion'* ..., There are two main structural requisities of Government. All Governments are characteri-

zed by a *Structure of Authoritative Decision-making'* and a *'Structure of Accountability'*. But at present the village is devoid of both to a substantial extent. See "David Apter's Analysis" in *Models of Political Systems*, by Morton R. Davies and Vaughn A. Lewis (Vikas, Delhi), 1971, pp. 68-69.

19. Prafulla Mahanti (*My village, My Life*, (Gorgi, London, 1973), p. 144.
20. Gandhiji suggests annual election of panches, See *Harijan*, 26 July 1942.
21. Elections to the Local Bodies are at the mercy of the State Government. They must be conducted at regular intervals. No statutory provision can meet the situation. A canscious public opinion is the only answer.
22. *Harijan*, n. 20.

THE CASTE-COUNCIL OF THE KANSARI OF RURAL ORISSA-AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

K. K. Mohanty

Introduction

Numerous authors have recorded much on the caste system of India, its origin, structures, and functions and studied all its aspects including cultural contours from various angles of vision. They have also explored the potentialities of such studies which, inspire and guide the present day social scientists. The social ritual, economic and political activities of the caste determine and dominate the ritual culture of India. It is considered as the structural-functional basis of the Hinduism. With this stable background and deep-rooted stem, it provides a socio-political mechanism to men in India. However insignificant the mechanism may appear, it provides a clue to the total understanding of the formal political structure of the country. A caste-council of the rural base may be termed as an institution of micro-politics in the arena of sociology of law and legal institutions. Prof. Dube in his foreward to 'Leadership in India', edited by Prof. Vidyarathi, has aptly stated, "In the absence of knowledge regarding the processes of micro-politics in tribal and village India, no definite assessment of the macro-politics of country can be undertaken[1]". Further Prof. Srinivas has pointed out "I am convinced, 'however' that the study of the submerged legal system is extremely important and will be one of the things which will have to be undertaken if we plan to develop a much neglected field of studies, namely, the sociology of law and legal institutions[2]". This mechanism operates and while operating safeguards conventions, customs and traditions and laws. It inflicts punishments for violation of laws. their infractions and breaches.

The present paper is an outcome of the field-work under taken among the Kansari, an "artisan-cum-trading" caste of Orissa, in

1967. This is just a preliminary paper unravelling some aspects of caste-council and it further has the potentiality to explore the 'historico-legal riddle' of the people. While discussing about the nature of the Caste-Council it also focuses light on the rote of Mahapatra, the *de jure* and *de facto* headman of their caste-council.

The Kansari

The Kansari is a trading caste of Orissa who make and sell bell-metal and brass utensils and vessels. The name of the caste has been derived from Kansa (Sanskrit, Kansya), meaning bell-metal. 'Kansari, Kansabanik, the brazier caste of Bengal', states Risley. popularly supposed to be an offshoot of the Subarnabanik, degraded because its members took to working in Kansa or bell-metal'. Dalton is of opinion that it is one of the trading castes who rank under the Sudra varna in Patna Division. Hiralal describes, 'The Kansaris are a respectable caste, ranking next to the Sunars among the urban craftsman,[3]. In Orissa they are chiefly concentra ted in the districts of Puri, Cuttack, Balasore, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Ganjam and Dhenkanal. In the district of Puri, the Chief centres of manufacture of bell-metal and brass-utensils and vessels are located at Kantilo and Balakati and the surrounding villages. The brass workers are known as the *Tamera*.

The Kansaris bear different titles, such as, Mahapatro, Mahana, Sahu, Das, Prusty, Gada and Subudhi, etc. The *tou* workers are known as the *Thatari*.

In the hearsays and myths regarding the origin of this caste it is evident that they still claim themselves to belong to the Kshyatriya varna. That their ancestors were using sacred thread on the occasion of marriage and they do not use the thread ordinarily as they engage themselves in the melting of metals. They give an account of Viswakarma, the supreme architect of the heaven as their ancestor. These myths are suggestive of an occupational theory of origin of the caste.

The Village Under Study

Bainchua is a village with a population of 2,115 persons (1961)

of which there are 1,091 males and 1,024 females. The village occupies an area of 581.64 acres in the police station af Balianta. It come under the administrative jurisdiction of Bhubaneswar sub-division, in the district of Puri, Orissa. There are as many as 409 households with 343 numbers of houses. It is a picturesque village situated towards the eastern bank of Kushabhadra, a tributary of the Mahanadi, the longest river of Orissa. The village is situated at a distance of about 4 miles from Bhubaneswar. The village, Rathijema is roughly 4 miles away from Bainchua.

Jatiana Sabha

The caste-council of the Kansari is known as the Jatiana Sabha. This institution governs the internal affairs of the caste and deals with policy making, their execution and breaches. Although such councils have no statutory provision they function within a definite frame of reference and receive the consensus of the caste-brethren. Besides the headman of the council known as the Mahapatra, there is an assistant known as the Mahana and a few mamalatkaras at all levels who play active roles in the council. The council is usually held at the campus of a deity. The size of the meeting is determined by the region it embraces.

The caste-council has a number of fundamental traits arounds which its life is organised. They give it its distinct charactor, and are the foundations of the caste-council. The Kansari caste has, owing to contacts in recent years, shown perceptible changes in the sense of values towards the Jatiana Sabha. However, this paper does not deal with change, but discusses the nature of caste-council in its traditional frame of reference.

The Mahapatra

The post of Mahapatra is hereditary among the Kansari's. The role played by him is considered as dominant and it is superordinate over a subordinate group of caste-brethren. The subordinate group shows a sense of loyalty in a flow of coninuous interactions, in political, social, economic and religious spheres. He exercises a power of authority and becomes the mainspring of direction, organisation and control. He attains a specific social prominence and acquires a special status in his community. He

becomes an embodiment of institutionalization of the legal system. This social prominence is backed by force, authority and power. He also fulfills all requisite characteristic of a true leader in so far as his own caste is concerned. The following revelation on the role of the Mahapatra in the village under study will further highlight the issue.

Soon after the sad demise of Hiralal Mahapatra, the "Mahapatra", of the Kansari, Balaram Mahapatra, his son, was declared automatically as the 'Mahapatra'. The present Mahapatra, aged about 30 years admitted that he was not well-conversant and acquainted with the role of Mahapatra. Certain manuscript records available with him, however, focus on several important aspect of the role of Mahapatra among the Kansaris. In all their marraige feasts Mahapatra occupies the first position among all the invitees. He is previously given areca nut (32 gai) as many as 320 in number and 32 adhala (a half-piece coin in British India). But recently due to increased price of areca nuts he receives 10 nos. of Jati-gua (caste areca-nut)-10 nos. of Mahapatri gua (Mahapatri's areca-nut) and 4 annas in cash. In case he attends a marriage ceremony he receives 4 annas as travelling allowances, 8 to 16 annas as the fare of palanquin, 4 annas as hasabuda kharcha (fee for cerimonial hand-washing) and a piece of new cloth (dhoti). In case a man is unable to bear the expenses incurred in purchase of a piece of dhoti, he is exempted with the prior permission of the Mahapatra. In the feast he starts taking food first and others follow.

He is entitled to receive dues in cash to be dedicated to various deities on account of performance of marriage ceremony in their caste. The Mahapatra is also entitled to collect fines levied on persons who are found guilty by the caste-council on account of the breach of caste rules and regulations.

When fines are collected and are accumulated to a considerable size feasts are arranged by the Mahapatra, and in addition the caste-representatives from other nearby villages participate in the feasts. Among the cognizable offences and breaches of caste rules and regulations the cases such as illicit relations with other caste men, divorce without mutual consent and without the notice of the council, the suffering of a person due to wounds which are later infested by worms, and breach of social, religious and

economic regulations etc., are included.

A complaint regarding a domestic affair was submitted for the consideration of Hiralal Mahapatra, the ex-leader of their caste-council of Fifty-Houses (Pachasaghara) jurisdiction. The following is an abstract of the proceedings of the case : Satyapriya Mahana of Rathijema married the daughter of Kelu Mahana of Hirapur. The married couple did not pull on well with each other and there was no congenial domestic atmosphere. It resulted in frequent quarrels between them. Consquently on the requests of the son-in-law and the father-in-law a council meeting of the Pachasaghara jurisdiction was convened. The council headed by Hiralal Mahapatra enquired into the matter and it was found out that both the parties were at fault. Satyapriya Mahana was ready to divorce his wife and Kelu Mahana was prepared to take back his daughter on account of the dissolution of the marriage. A sum of rupees sixty-five from Satyapriya Mahana and Twenti-five from Kelu Mahana was collected as the fees of divorce (pauna) due to the Pachasaghara caste-council and the case was disposed of.

A case dealing with ex-communication was revealed from the manuscript records collected from Balaram Mahapatra. The case occurred during the headmanship of his father.

The Case. "The purpose of submission of this account by Rama Maharana of village Achhutapur, P. O. Kamaguru, district, Puri, that our brother's son, i.e., our nephew Lambodar Maharana disobeyed our caste-members about 10 years back. On last 1-1-1951 he died by an attack of diarrhoea somewhere on the way to Kaluparaghat. As he had no good terms with our caste-brethren we did not participate in his cremation. We also suspect by whom he was cremated. Accordingly, by the permission of our caste members, we approached Hiralal Mahapatra, the leader (Kulasreshtra) of our caste and paid him the required fees for the purification ceremony. We invited him (The Mahapatra) to our village, Achhutapur, and also paid an amount of one rupee towards travelling allowances, etc. The end.

This work has been done.

Date : 11-1-1951

Achhutapur
Sd./- Shama Maharana
Sd./- Madhub Sahu
Sd./- Bhairothi Sahu

Rathijemapatna
Sd./- Bhagirathi Sahu
Rathijemapatna
Dt. 13-1-1951
Achhutapur

The proceedings. "The nephew of Rama Maharana died on the wayside. As his corpse was carried for cremation by the untouchables and not by our castemen, Rama Maharana is declared guilty for violation of casterules. He (Rama Maharana) went to the police station located at Ranapur to lodge a complaint against such action. They (police authorities) told that they would come to their village after the arrival of the Mahapatra. Then the Mahapatra was intimated and he opined that they had to do something about the business relating to the caste-assembly on the 15 January 1951 in their village. After this (the Mahapatra) said that, their 12th day ceremony connected with the funeral could not be postponed. Accordingly, he was compelled to come for the occasion. After his arrival, in the presence of local caste-members he sent letters to you (caste-members of Ranpur). But you replied to manage work. If it is not possible, we would come to your village, provided a massenger is sent on 15.1.1951. The Mahapatra applied his conscience and told that the 12th day ceremony could not be postponed till the 15th day. On hearing this, according to dictation we completed the performance of purificatory ceremony of Rama Mahapatra."

Sd./- Hiralal Mahapatra
Sd./- Lambodar Maharana and
four other signatures.

Conclusion At Achhutapur. "We invited our Kulahati leader of the caste on account of the purificatory ceremony of Rama Maharana. He was present on the occasion and we bade him farewell after showing him proper respect. And we have become free of the sins of ex-communication."

Sd./ Rama Mahana
Date, the 13 January 1951.

Inferences. The above account suggests that the Kansari association is primarily a socio-cultural organisation organised at different levels—local, sub-regional and regional. its primary function is to maintain the solidarily and identity of the caste

members through the continued observance of castes norms and rules by them. Disputes of certain types among its members are settled by it and the guilty are punished, being forced to pay a fine prescribed by the council. The head of the council exercises a lot of power, and commands considerable respect. Unlike some caste associations, especially in other states like Gujrat and Bihar, the Kansari council seldom plays and political role. It is not mobilised at the time of elections in favour of any particular party or candidate. Nor is its head a vote leader.

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29

WOMEN POLITICS IN ORISSA

Ashalata Parija
Sailabala Baral
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Woman have long been a supressed group. In all spheres of life they have been systematically dominated by men. The subjugation of women by men is not confined only to developing countries. This is also present, though to a lesser degree, in most advanced countries. However, since the last few years, women's liberation movements have gained some momentum in western countries. Their spillover effect in developing countries does not appear to be significant. It is thus apparent that the level of development of a country is correlated with the status of women in that country. A corollary of this hypothesis is that the nature of women's participation in politics is greatly affected by the level of development of a country. Further, the socio-economic status of a woman tends to affect her political participation.

In the present study we have dealt with the nature of participation of women in Orissa politics. For this we made use of macro-data—the representation of women in the Parliament as well as in the Orissa Legislative Assembly. In order to get a comparative picture of women's political participation before independence and after it, we studied the role of Oriya women in the freedom struggle and their representation in the Orissa Legislature between 1936 and 1947.

Women Politics in the Pre-Independence Period

Indian history provides a few examples of Indian women having excelled as rulers and statesmen. But, by and large, our women used to fight shy of taking part in politics. In fact, political participation by them started during the Indian freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi was a strong advocate of female participation

in politics.[1] Our independence movement produced some eminent women leaders like Anni Besant, Sarojini Naidu and Durga Bai.

Rapid expansion of communication, education, industrialisation and urbanisation seems to have brought about some change in the attitude and outlook of Indian women.[2] They have, to some extent, been modernised. But they have not been fully free of the cultural values and mores of India. Empirical evidences suggest that Indian women, in general, are politically much less active than Indian men.[3] It has been further said that the spread of literacy and mass communication motivate women to be interested and active in politics.[4] These forces tend to stimulate their political awareness.

In poor India Orissa happens to be one of the poorest countries with a semi-feudal economy and a predominantly conservative culture. To a great extent, conservatism in Orissan society—for that matter in the whole of India—has been a function of its feudal economy. The domination of one class by another class has resulted in the domination of one caste by another caste and the domination of women by men. Throughout our history man has occupied the central stage while the woman has been forced to perish in the wings. The leaderships and authority structures have mostly been dominated by men who have, through ancient traditions, forced women to remain under *purdah.*

The gap between men and women in pre-independence Orissa politics can be inferred from the fact that none of the three ministries of Orissa of the period (1936-1947) included a single woman member. Further, still more important to note is that not a single woman was elected to the Orissa legislative assembly from a general constituency. While Sarala Devi and Punyaprabha Devi were elected from Cuttack Town's women-constituency, A. Laxmi Bai was returned from Berhampur Town's Women Constituency.

However, some prominent women of the state took part in India's freedom struggle. They were Malati Choudhury, Rama Devi, Sarala Devi and Annapurna Maharana. They were close comrades of leaders like H. K. Mahtab, Nilakantha Das and Nabakrishna Choudhury.[5] These women fighters who took part in the "Salt Agitation" of 1930, and the Quit India Movement of 1942 courted arrest several times.[6] They also played

important roles in the peasent agitations of those days.[7] Some of them took great risks by joining the Praja Mandal Movement going on in the princely states of Orissa. The number of women freedom fighter was, no doubt, very small. It is also true that they came of middle class families whose male members themselves were active participants in the freedom struggle.[8] But one must assess their role in the context of intense conservative atmosphere that pervaded a backward society like Orissa's. In view of the fact that the then society (even today) viewed with suspicion and hostility any woman coming to the public, the participation of this small group of women in the independence movement was significant.

It is important to note that even among the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women there were some freedom fighters. In the distant hills of Koraput and Ganjam districts, some tribal women risked their lives by jumping into the freedom struggle. Long before the Congress Party succeeded in spreading the freedom movement to the nook and corner of the country, there broke out an intense anti-British rebellion in the Parlakhemundi region of Orissa. In the first part of the 19th century, Krishna Chadra Bishoyee, the chief of Gumma division of the Parlakhemundi kingdom, and his wife, Hiramani Bishoyee, carried, on war against the British for 20 long years. After his death, his wife led the guerrilla war for 10 years more with great patriotism and determination. She lost the war, but won the applause of the British General Russell who wrote : "I have rarely seen a woman who is as ferocious in war and as kind-hearted in peace as Hiramani Bisani. She will remain for ever for me an ideal and uncommon woman for her war strategy, her ability to use the natural environment to her advantage, her great patience and, above all, her fearlessness."[9]

In the second part of the 19th century and in the early phase of the 20th century, a few brave tribal women led rebellions in Koraput district against the British rule. Bangara Devi, a Koya princess, who ascended the throne of Malkangiri in 1835 launched an attack on British troops in 1860.[10] Khare Parvati, a Bonda woman, carried on a protracted guerrilla war against the British. After much harassment, the British troops were able to capture and kill her and her son in 1916 near the river Sileru.[11] Another

tribal woman who took part in the anti-British movement was Luxmi Saurani, a Saura by caste, who belonged to a small village near Gunupur.[12] She was an active Congress volunteer. She attended, along with Luxman Nayak,[13] the secret Congress meeting held at Jeypore on 31 July 1942 which decided to start "Quit India" movement in Koraput district. History books have hardly recorded the noble deeds of these tribal women. But this would not minimise the magnitude of their sacrifices for the independence of their mother-land.

Post-Independence Women Politics

After India become independent, there was some increase in the political participation of women. Many of them contested in local and general elections—relatively more in the latter than in the former. A few of them were appointed as ministers both in states and at the centre. But the real power continued to lie with men. It is true that Mrs. Gandhi played a long inning as the Prime Minister of India. But one should take into account, in this regard, her family background. Her elevation as the Prime Minister of India was largely due to the fact that she was the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, the most important political leader of free India. Thus, the political ascendancy of Mrs. Gandhi does not really signify any general improvement in the political status of women of the country.

In Orissa, a few women have become ministers. But for one, they were not very influential. Upto the end of 1960s the political scene in Orissa was dominated by male leaders like H. K. Mahatab, Biju Pattanaik, R. N. Singh Deo and Biren Mitra. Basanta Manjari Devi, the "queen" (Rajamata) of Ranpur,[14] was first a deputy minister and then a minister of Health. But she was not an important political leader with state-wide influence. She was, at best, a "decorative piece" of the cabinet. Mrs. Saraswati Pradhan, elected from the Bhatli assembly constituency of Sambalpur district, was a deputy minister (Education) from 1961 to 1970. The fact that she could not be promoted from the deputy ministership to a higher post even though she served in three ministries,[15] suggests that she was not an important political leader. May be, she was appointed as a deputy minister because she was an

educated *woman*.

It was only in 1970s that there was some change in the political balance between men and women. Mrs, Nandini Satapathy, who was a minister of state at the Centre was "sent by Mrs. Gandhi" to Orissa as its Chief Minister in 1972. She remained as the Chief Minister upto 1976 when she was forced by Mrs. Gandhi to resign. Mrs. Satapathy was an effective administrator and a strong-willed politician. She proved to be a close match for male politicians. She dominated the political scend of Orissa for five years. But her political supremacy did not signify any significant woman-power in Orissa politics. Neither during the period when she was in power, nor after she was thrown out of it did any other Oriya woman become active and prominent in the state politics or in the national politics. She was succeeded as the Chief Ministers of Orissa by Binayak Acharya, Nilamani Routray and Janaki Ballav Pattaniak. Neither the Acharya Ministry nor the Routray ministry included a woman minister. There is, of course, a woman deputy minister named Mrs. Saraswati Hemram in the present ministry headed by J. B. Pattanaik of the Congress (I). But She is mostly without any substantive power and function. Mrs. Hemram, who has been elected from the Kaliana Constituency of Mayurbhanja district (scheduled tribe reserved constituency), is a minister because of the "quota" usually kept for the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people. Thus the political ascendancy of Mrs. Satapathy was an exception rather than a rule. It did not indicate a general trend regarding the role of women in Orissa politics.

Between 1952 and 1980 only a small number of women have been elected to the Orissa Legislative Assembly (Tab.1). While in 1952 there were only 2 women M.L.As, in 1980 election 5 women were elected to the legislative assembly. But it is not a significant improvement. Because as early as in 1957 there were 5 women M.L.As. In fact, in 1977, 7 women (the highest so far) were elected as M.L.As. Thus there has not been a steady and significant increase in the number of women M.L.As. between 1952 and 1980.

Table 2 suggests that the Oriya women MLAs elected so far mostly belong to the elite castes of the State. As a single group, the Kshyatriya caste (connected with "royal" houses) has

Table-1. Women MLAs Profile, 1952 to 1980.

Year	No. of candidates	Women candidates	Total seats	Elected Women candidates
1952	517	4	140	3
1957	508	16	140	5
1961	533	10	140	1
1967	603	12	140	5*
1971	835	12	140	0
1974	722	15	147	4
1977	603	18	147	7
1980	781	16	147	5

*Mrs Nandini Satapathy won the bye-election from Cuttack city in 1972.

Table-2. Caste Profile of women legislators.

Year	Brahmin	Kshyatriya	Karana	Khandayat	S.C.	S.T.	Others
1952		3					
1957		5					
1961		3		1			
1967		3		1			
1971*	1						
1974	2	1		1			
1977	2	4	1				
1980	1					4	

* No women was elected to the Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1971. But in 1972, bye-election from Cuttack city, Mrs Satapathy was elected.

contributed the lagest number of women MLAs. The apparent dominance of Kshyatriya women over other women in the field of politics is primarily due to the feudal background and nature of the state. During the British rule there were 26 Garjats (Princely states) whose rulers were designated as kings enjoying substantial loyalty of their subjects. Moreover, there were a large number of Zamindars who were also locally known as Rajas (Kings) and wielded similar influance over their subjects Many of them were , no doubt, oppressive and were opposed not only to the freedom movement, but also to the merger of their states with Orissa. It was expected that they would be

rejected by the people in the democratic politics of free India. But, contrary to the expectation, they did very well in general elections. That was because the people were very much disappointad not only by the poor performance of their so-called democratic leaders, but also by the maladministration by the officials who were sent to the ex-princely states.[16] Thus the traditional loyalty of the people towards their feudal lords coupled with their disillusionment over the failure of new leaders to rise to their expectations made them harp upon their ex-rulers whose family members both male and female—scored grand victories in general elections.

It is important to note that upto 1971 not a single Brahmin woman could be elected as an MLA even though it is one of the two castes which constitute the "dominant castes" of the state. It was only in 1972 that Mrs Satapathy, a Brahmin, was elected to the Legislative Assembly in a bye-election. The Karan caste, the other dominant caste in the state, fares still worse in this respect. Between 1952 and 1980, only one Karan woman (in the year 1977) elected was as an MLA. On the other hand, Khandayats, who constitute the most numerous caste group in the state, but placed lower than the Karans in the social hierarchy, fare better than the latter in respect of women representation in the Legislative Assembly. During this period, three Khandayat women have won assembly elections. For scheduled tribes 1980 was very important. Between 1952 and 1979, no scheduled tribes

Table 3. Party affiliation of Women Legislators

Year	Congress	G.P/ Swatantra.	Jana Congress.	Utkal Congress.	Janata	Congress (U)	Independents.
1952	2						1
1957	2	3					
1961	2	2					
1967	1	1	2				
1971	1*						
1974	3			1			
1977	1				5		1
1980	4					1	

* Mrs Satapathy won bye-election in 1972.

woman was an MLA. But in 1980, as many as four of them were elected to the Legislative Assembly. Despite the fact that all of them contested from scheduled tribe constituency, the importance of their success can not be underplayed. Out of 5 women MLAs elected in that year, as many as 4 belonged only to the scheduled tribe.

It is apparent from Table 3 that the women MLAs elected so far mostly belonged to a "rightist" political party or "centrist parties". Between 1952 and 1967, the Ganatantra Parishad (later the Swatantra Party) sent 6 women to the Legislative Assembly. All others except 2 independents belong to the centrist parties like the Congress (later, Cong. (I) the Jana Congress, the Utkal Congress, the Congress (U) and the Janata. It is significant that as many as 16 out of 33 women MLAs belonged to the Congress only. It is noteworthy that no leftist party has so far been able to send even one women MLA to the Orissa Legislative Assembly. This contrast in the performance of Leftist parties *vis-a-vis* the Rightist and Centrist parties is not very surprising in view of the "fedualistic and bourgeois political culture" of the state. First, the Leftist parties, as such, are not important political forces is the state. Secondly, their supporters mostly belong to the low-middle class and the low class of the society, and it is unlikely that any woman of either class would successfully compete in general elections.

The elitist nature of women politics in Orissa is further evident from the Table 4., which indicates that some women leaders have been elected more than once to the legislative assembly. Even two of them have been elected three times each while another has the distinction of being elected four times. While, in total, the number of times women MLAs have been returned in assembly elections is 33, only 7 women MLAs have won as many as 17 times, that is, a slightly more than 50 per cent of the total frequency. Of course, it may be relevantly added that the same pattern prevails in the frequency, of electoral success of men MLAs of Orissa. People like H.K. Mahtab, Biju Pattanaik, R.N. Singh Deo, Nilamani Routray and Pabitra Mohan Pradhan have won assembly elections couple of times each. Thus the elitist electoral performance in Orissa is a function of its developing political culture.

Table : 4. Frequency of win by women MLAs

	Name	Frequency
1.	Basanta Manjari Devi	2 (1952, 1957)
2.	Ratna Prabha Devi	3 (1957, 1961, 1967)
3.	Saraswati Pradhan	2 (1961, 1967)
4.	Sugyani Kumari Devi	2 (1974, 1977)
5.	Ananda Manjari Devi	2 (1974, 1977)
6.	Sairindri Nayak	2 (1974, 1977)
7.	Nandini Satapathy	4 (1972*, 1974, 1977 and 1980)
		* By-election
	Total :	17
	Grand Total =	33 (from 1952 to 1980

The electoral performance of Oriya women in respect of being elected to the Parliament is very miserable. Since 1952 only three women so far have been elected to the Rajya Sabha. They are Mrs Shilabala Das, Mrs Nandini Satapathy and Mrs Saraswati Pradhan. Oriya women fare still worse in respect of election to the Lok Sabha. Even the importance of this victory, from the point of view of 'the woman participation in higher politics, is greatly undermined when we take into account the background of the winner—Jayanti Pattanaik—who was no other than the

Table : 5. Area Representation of women MLAs

Sl. No.	Name of the District.	Frequency	Rank order
1.	Cuttack	9	1
2.	Dhenkanal	6	2
3.	Sambalpur	5	3
4.	Ganjam	4	4
5.	Puri	3	5
6.	Koraput	3	5
7.	Balasore	1	6
8.	Kalahandi	1	6
9.	Mayurbhanja	1	6

Coastal=Cuttack + Ganjam + Puri + Balasore=9 + 4 + 3 +1=17

Hilly All other districts 6+5+3+1+1=16

wife of J.B. Pattnaik, the present Chief Minister of the state.

It is inferred from Table 5 that there is apparently some balance between coastal districts and hilly districts in respect of woman representation in the state legislature. As against 17 woman MLAs from the coastal districts between 1952 and 1980, there are 16 MLAs from other districts during the same period. This Table, however, further indicates that while each coastal district is represented in the state legislature in terms of sending women members to it, there are some hilly districts like Phulbani, Bolangir, Keonjhar and Sundargarh which have never sent a women MLA to the state legislature. Moreover, Cuttack which is the most developed district in the state has the pride of sending the highest number of women MLAs to the Orissa Legislative Assembly. One notices the same pattern in the representation of Oriya women in the Parliament. Out 4 Oriya women elected so far to the Rajya Sabha (3) and the Lok Sabha (1), three were from the coastal region while only one hailed from the inland-region. Thus the regional imbalance in respect of over-all development between the coastal and hilly districts is reflected in their respective success in electing women MLAs and MPs.

Orissa is predominantly a Hindu province. The number of Muslims who are concentrated in a few pockets life Cuttack and Bhadrak is negligible. The Christians are slightly more numerous than the Muslims, but even then their strenght is not significant from the election point of view. Further, the converted Christians, mostly from low castes like Harijans and Adivasis, are generally poor. It is thus not a surprise that not a single Muslim or Christian woman from Orissa has so far been elected either to the Parliament or to the State legislature.

Most of the people of Orissa speak Oriya while Telugu is the mother-tongue of a small number of people residing in its southern districts like Ganjam and Koraput. Both before independence and some years after it, the Andhraites had a firm control over the economy and the politics of Ganjam district. Luxmi Bai—a Telugu woman—was elected twice from the reserved constituency (for women) of Berhampur in pre-1947 period. But in course of time the grip of Andhraites over the politics of the area—even over the local economy and education—has tended to slacken. No longer has Berhampur, the only city of southern

Orissa, got a predominantly Telugu complexion. Some male members of Telugu community are able, even today, to be elected to the Lok Sabha and the state legislature. But since 1952 not a single Telugu woman of Orissa has been elected to these representative bodies. Thus, in this respect, the picture in Orissa is much different from that of Assam which is a multi-religious and multi-lingual state. In Assam women Legislators, elected so far, include quite a significant number of Bengali-speaking and Muslim women.[17]

Conclusion

Feudal economy coupled with conservatism and feudal values have resulted in the dominance of women by men for centuries. The women liberation movement has made some progress in western countries. But its impact in developing countries is not up to the mark. Women in India in general and in Orissa in particular continue to be a subjugated group with their social and political freedom greatly inhibited and restricted by social "laws".

During the freedom struggle a few Oriya women, moved by patriotism, crossed the social barriers and actively participated in the freedom movement. After Independence there was some increase in the political participation by women. By a small number, they were elected to the Parliament and the State Legislature, and a few of them were appointed as ministers. However, even in this restricted sense of political participation. that is, in respect of representation in legislatures, the performance of Oriya women has so far not been encouraging and the gap between men and women is almost as wide as ever. Further, the women political activists of Orissa, both before 1947 and after it, mostly belong to the elite stratum of the society. A few women of "depressed communities" who have managed to be elected to the state legislature, have returned only from reserved constituencies.

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7. For the role of Rama Devi and other women activists in the Salt Satyagraha in Cuttack district, see Patnaik, Ibid., p. 90. Rama Devi was jailed for two years for having taken part in the Quit India Movement. See "Srimati Rama Devi", *Samaj*, (Cuttack), 21 August, 1981).
7. Malati Choudhury, in collaboration with Surendra Nath Dwevedi played an important role in staging the peasant agitation in Kujanga area of Cuttack district. (Interview with Malati Choudhury).
8. Malati Choudhury is the wife of Naba Krishna Choudhury, while Rama Devi is the wife of Gopabandhu Choudhury, the elder brother of N. Choudhury. G. Choudhury was not only an important freedom fighter, but also a great Bhoodanist. A Moharana also belongs to the Choudhury family.
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trict in National Freedom Movement (M.A Dissertation, P.G. Department of Political Science, Berhampur University, Orissa, 1980), p. 44.

13. Luxman Nayak, a tribal of Koraput district, led tribal agitations, against British rule and on a false charge, was hanged in 1943 for his role in the Quit India Movement of 1942 (Mishra, 1980, 31-37).
14. Ranapur was an ex-princely state (*Garjat*) situated in Puri district.

    Basanta Manjari Devi was appointed as a Deputy Minister in 1952. She was elevated to the cabinet rank in 1957.
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TRADE UNIONS AND POLITICS IN ORISSA

B. S. Murty

This papar examines the links that Orissa trade unions have with political parties and the kind of interaction that takes place between them. In other words, to what extent the politics and functioning of trade unions are influenced by politics : what implications the political unionism has for the trade union organisations; and how the benefits flow from the party-union nexus? A theoretical framework is also provided to understand and analyse these aspects in their proper perspective.

A striking feature of the labour movements of most developing countries and even some developed ones is the close association between trade unions and political parties. Their association in India, is so intimate that the cleavages in the labour movement have often been considered a function of the union's ideological commitments.[1] Unions' links with political parties are not only inevitable, but even necessary to some extent.[2] Since the decisions on issues vitally affecting the interests of labour are taken as much in the legislature as across the bargaining table, it is in the interest of labour to exert influencs over political parties.

Trade unions need the help of political parties for two reasons. First, their social and economic demands need to be articulated through political channels and political parties are good channels for this. Secondly, the working class often lacks in able leaders which can be provided by political parties.

The bed-rock of political power in India is not the working class. During elections working class votes count little. A large majority, about three-fourths of the legislators, come from rural constituencies. Yet workers' votes are still regarded important because the opposition parties believe that it is relatively easier to organise an urban constituency because of the compact area *vis-a-vis* the tradition bound and less responsive and extensive rural areas. Once the unions are organised, the political parties can look upon them as not only centres of influence but also a

permanent means of vote catching.

A party which holds the reins of government and which is primarily concerned with economic development and the maintenance of political stability, comes to evince interest in trade unions with different purposes. Trade unions' influence is particularly decisive in those basic sector such as iron and steel, fuel and energy or the transport industry, which vitally affect the economic growth. Union leaders who control workers in these basic industries wield considerable power, not so much due to the number of workers on whom they can have a sway but because of the crucial contribution the industries make to the national economy. The government can ill-afford to ignore such unions and it is natural that the party in power gets itself interested in patronising unions which pledge their loyalty to it and which ungrudgingly extend their support in realising the economic and social objectives of the government.

The ruling party and the opposition parties vie with each other to develop control over workers in those important industries. Comparatively speaking, the government is in a better position than the non-government forces because, if it likes it can influence legal machinery in favour of those unions which support it and against unions which oppose it.[3]

Origins of Unionism

The Indian Trade Unions Act was passed in 1926. With the enactment of this legislation trade unions could be formed as legal entities to carry on legitimate trade union activities. After a decade on the passage of this Act or approximately two decades after the establishment of the first organised trade union[4] in India, the province of Orissa saw (in 1936) the birth of the first trade union viz., Rambha Rice Mills Labour Association. Although the Rambha Union was the first to register, in fact, Cuttack Press Workers Union should be reckoned as the first organised union to be formed in Orissa. The union takes legitimate pride from the fact that even today it retains its original registration number one and continues to champion the cause of press workers. Unionism among rice mill workers at Rambha was based on slender ground. Trade unionism in Orissa could be said to

have started with the formation of Cuttack Press Workers Union in 1939.

Union Affiliation

INTUC, AITUC, HMS, UTUC, BMS and CITU are the six important national federations of trade unions in India. These federations, then, are at the apex of the organisational forms mainifested by Indian unionism. All of these are animated by the universal objective of organising the working class[5]. The primary objective contained in the constitution of the AITUC, the oldest of these federations, is typical of this aim : "To coordinate the activities of all the labour organisations in all the provinces in India, and generally further the interests of Indian labour in matters economic, social and political[6].

The state branches of all the six all-India federations in Orissa maintain regional offices to coordinate the work of their affiliates. These branches have built up their following in every important industry of the state. But 78 per cent of the total unions in Orissa, which reported their membership in 1980, covering about 46 per cent of the total union membership were "independent" or were not affiliated to any national federation. It may be possible that some unions have not indicated their affiliation in the annual returns submitted by them. The figures in respect of the number of unions and membership affiliated to the national labour centres are given in Table I.

Official figures 1980 indicate that 145 unions (21.61 per cent) of the 671 unions whose returns have been submitted, covering a total membership of 1,72,937 (or 53.81 per cent) were affiliated to the six national federations. Total membership figure for the same year was 3,21,411 for 671 unions. It is possible that a few more unions which failed to submit their returns might have been affiliated to one or the other labour federation, but there is no means of ascertaining their exact following. In any case, it may not constitute a significant proportion of the total affiliated membership. It is observed that the large unions in the organised sector, particularly manufacturing industries, are affiliated to one or the other national federation, where as many small unions

Table-I (a) Distribution of unions and membership according to affiliation during 1966 to 1976

Name of the	1966		1969		1971		1976	
federation	N.U	M	N.U	M	N.U	M	N.U	M
INTUC	12	17,910	12	9,819	11	8,061	54	50,861
AITUC	7	10,524	9	4,727	8	11,424	40	34,737
HMS	18	25,341	13	11,997	10	13,356	20	26,644
UTUC	3	2,722	1	1,608	5	8,002	7	12,746
BMS	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	2,717
CITU	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	4,084
INDEPENDENT & OTHERS	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	N.A	356	74,926
Total	40	56,497	35	28,151	34	40,843	491	2,06,715

Source : Annual Returns submitted by the trade unions office of the Commissioner of Labour
N.U.=No. of unions. M=Membership. N.A. Not available.

Table-I (b) Distribution of unions and membership according to affiliation during 1977-to 1980

Name of the federation	1977 N.U	1977 M	1978 N.U	1978 M	1979 N.U	1979 M	1980 N.U	1980 M
INTUC	46	52,674	38	35,528	40	36,662	43 (6.42)	46,337 (19.42)
AITUC	35	37,376	32	36,852	30	39,096	37 (5.51)	41,571 (12.73)
HMS	17	25,648	16	27,444	15	29,698	18 (2.68)	33,242 (10.34)
UTUC	7	13,441	7	13,645	9	31,403	9 (1.34)	33,297 (10.36)
BMS	8	3,184	18	3,184	11	3,163	11 (1.64)	8,531 (2.65)
CITU	6	3,629	11	6,817	21	7,490	27 (4.02)	9,959 (4.0)
INDEPENDENT & OTHERS	39	82,649	423	1,27,876	472	1,32,342	526 (78.39)	1,48,474 (46.19)
Total	510	2,18,601	535	2,51,346	598	2,79,854	671	3,21,411

Source : Annual Returns submitted by the trade unions office of the Commissioner of Labour.
N.U No. of unions. M Membership. N.A. Not available

in the unorganised sector remain outside the rubric of the central federations. This could be attributed to the fact that the parties concentrate more on the organised sector than the unorganised and are interested in big unions rather than small ones because of their size and organisational advantage.

INTUC's Lead Over Other Federations

In terms of the relative strength of the six federations in 1980 as shown in Table I, INTUC had the largest following (46,337) which accounted for 14.42 per cent of the total membership. It is followed by AITUC (41,571) UTUC (33,297) HMS (33,242) CITU (9,959) and BMS (8,531). A cursory examination of the affiliated unions and their membership figures between 1966-80 indicates that while HMS was ahead of other federations till 1971, it was INTUC which had ascendancy after that, HMS leadership which pioneered union movement in the early years and a strong force till 1971, began losing its stronghold. Some of its power bases were lost to INTUC. For example, Chowdwar which was completely under the grip of HMS till 1969, passed gradually into the hands of INTUC.

Role of Political Leaders

The Indian Trade Union movement has been deeply influenced by political leaders who were prominent in the national struggle for independence. The case of Orissa is no exception to this. Here also the political leaders exerted great influence on the workers and played a significant role in giving direction to the working class goals, and helping labour to express grievances in an organised fashion. Orissan nationalist leaders particularly Harekrushna Mahtab, Biren Mitra, Biswanath Das, Nilamani Routray, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, Surendranath Dwivedi attracted large number of workers to their meetings and sought their active participation in, and support for their political work. The main aim of the leaders was to create political consciousness and to rouse nationalist sentiments amongst workers. The spirit of nationalism was pervading the entire country and these leaders could easily attract

the attention of the workers. But it must be mentioned that the organisational aspect of the labour did not engage their serious thought. Nor did they undertake any substantial work of economic nature on behalf of the workers. Though their sympathy to the workers' cause was never in doubt, they did not, in general, undertake the work of union organisation. They could be considered, in this sense, promoters of workers' welfare rather than the pioneers of labour movement. Many of these leaders accepted political offices after the popular rule was established. It is perhaps their pre-occupation with party organisation work and running of the government that detracted their attention from the labour field. It could also be that the leaders perhaps felt that the working class vote would hardly make any difference in their political fortunes. The proportion of workers in the state's population at that time was not very significant because most of the industries were established only after independence, particularly with the advent of planning in 1950s. Thus union organisational tasks were left to the efforts of less prominent and second rank leadership in the state.

Growth of Political Influence

(i) During the Early Period :

During 1930's and 1940's both the Communists and Socialists organised workers and peasant for improving the latter's conditions. But the Communists paid more attention to the peasant front while the Socialists became more active in the labour front.

The Socialists were successful in organising the early unions in different industries and paved the way for laying the foundation for a labour movement in the State. Dhuleswar Bastia, Samarendra Kundu, S. N. Dwivedi and Nisamani Khuntia, were active among this group. They were able to capture the mood of agitation and protest of the agricultural and industrial labour. Thus, unions in textile mill at Choudwar, Collieries at Dera, Deulbera in Talchar area, glass works at Barang, Paper Mills at Brajrajnagar, mehantars at Cuttack and Government Press workers at Cuttack, were organised by Congress Socialist leaders who, upon their parting ways from the Congress party, and with the establishment of their own label (Socialist Party), got their unions affiliated

to the H. M. S. Communists were also trying hard at organising workers but as their main preoccupation was leading the peasant movement and the ryots' uprisings, the problems of industrial workers did not receive their serious attention. However, they led the strikes of sweepers at Puri and railway employees and promoted unions in the formative period among press workers, electricity employees, mining workers of the state. Though the members of the Congress party associated themselves directly or indirectly with the formation of a few unions in the early stages, their efforts were by and large spasmodic and half-hearted.

(ii) Development in the 50's :

In the 50's with the coming into existence of some more industries and the rapid increase in workforce, the Socialists and Communists vied with each other to get control over workers. For Socialists, with their flying start earlier, it was a period of further gains and consolidation. They spread their organisation among workers of Kalinga Tubes, Choudwar, Orissa Cements of Rajgangpur, Rourkela Steel Plant, Hospital employees and such other industries. With the active efforts of Durga Charan Mahanty, Ram Chandra Ram, Baidyanath Rath and others, Communists could make a significant dent into the labour movement, for they were able to form unions in Rourkela Steel Plant, Bhaskar Textile Mills at Jharsuguda, Paper Mill at Brajrajnagar, Utkal Machinery at Kansbahal, Indian Alûminium Company at Hirakud, Electricity Board, Press workers, Iroa Ore and Manganese mines. For Congress ites the period was not without gains, for they were successful in getting unions formed among steel workers at Rourkala, dolomite and limestone workers at Biramitrapur, Langiberna and Hatibari, refractory workers at Belpaher and Rampur Colliery in Rampur, Paper Mill at Brajrajnagar, iron and manganese workers in Keonjhar district. Biren Mitra, H. K. Mahtab, Prafulla Ghadei, Binoy Kumar Mohanty and Sarat Kar were some of the Congress leaders prominent in trade unions. During this period the Socialist Unity Centre just joined the fray with their base at Rourkela. A significant development in the 50s was the establishment of the Rourkela Steel Plant in the public sector with an employment potential of over 36,000 workers. All the four impor-

tant federations were engaged in a kind of competition to gain control over the steel workers of Rourkela.

(iii) Development in the 60s

While the same pattern followed more or less in the 60s this decade witnessed some important changes. The trend towards concentration of the four competing labour centres in terms of particular area and industries became crystallised. Thus, AITUC got itself well entrenched in the light and heavy engineering and other industries of Sambalpur belt. INTUC was more prominent in the lime stone, dolomite and manganese mines and state-sponsored I. D. C. units, Paradio port, Motor transport services, iron and manganese workers. H. M. S., continued to have its hegemony over the Talcher Collieries, industries (paper, textile, tube manufacturing) at Choudwar, mehantars and medical workers, paper mill at Brajrajanagar, Cement workers at Rajgangpur. In all Tata undertakings INTUC unions were well established. INTUC and HMS had fluctuating fortunes with regard to their control over steel workers of Rourkela. While the former tasted the power of being the representative union for a brief spell, it was the latter which later replaced it as the recognised union for purposes of collective bargaining. Though, UTUC could enlarge its influence during this period, its centre of operation was, however, confined to Rourkela, covering a section of steel workers, industrial estate workers and the workers engaged in iron ore mines of the Rourkela Steel Plant.

Other developments which took place in the 60s were that some of the senior leaders died and some others had either taken up active party organisation work or were offered berths in the government or changed party loyalty. The death of Dhuleswar Bastia in 1967 created a vacuum in the trade union field. It was a particularly big loss to the HMS unions. However, the gap was filled by his competent votary, Rajkishore Samantray. He became instantly popular among workers and took control of all the HMS unions. He was ably assisted by Bhagavat Behera, Jagdish Nag and other lieutonants in his efforts. But it has to be mentioned that his naive and tactless handling of the union affairs in Kalinga Tubes, which were marked by indiscipline, physical force and violence, and which later culminated in the closure

of that industrial unit, did not augur well for HMS unions. A period of demoralisation set in as disaffection among workers spread rapidly. These development eventually led to the rapid decline of HMS control over its powerful 'Chowdwar base' towards the late '60s. This affected the overall prospects of HMS in the state. The pre-eminent position which it earlier occupied could not be regained again.

(iv) Development after 1970

The labour scene in Orissa saw two important developments in 1970s. First, as the CPI drew closer to the Congress (R) government headed by Mrs. Satapathy from 1972 to 1976, the AITUC Unions, which were usually militant against the government, started losing their militancy. All of a sudden they appeared to be moderate and cooperative. Secondly, the HMS unions seemed to suffer when some prominent leaders of the PSP with labour union background left the party and joined the Congress (R) in 1972. Some of them like R. K. Samantary and N. Khuntia continued to head their unions. But these unions developed credibility crisis as a result of the defection of these leaders. The Congress (R) developed keen interest in organising the labour force. It created a separate labour cell with Prafulla Ghadei, an experienced trade unionist, as its head.

Infiltration of Politics

One of the striking feature of the trade unions in Orissa is that they are controlled by outsiders, who are more often than not, connected with one political party or the other. Most of the unions were started with the initiative of the outside political leaders. The leader, taking the cue from the party to which he owes his allegiance, would mobilise workers and emphasize the need for a union. He might find instant support among workers, for he is supplying an important felt need for them Dera Colliery labour union and Deulbera Colliery Labour Union, which are among the earliest to be formed in the state, were initiated and started by Dhuleswar Bastia, a vetern trade unionist and a PSP worker. The three others, Rabi Ghosh, Rabindra Mohan Das and Bichhanda Chandra Pradhan, who played an active role in the

formation of these unions were also outsiders. Ghosh was a medical practitioner by profession whereas Das and Pradhan were followers of PSP. Rampur Colliery Mazdoor Congress owes its formation to the sustained efforts of Upendra Dikhit and Bijoy Kumar Pani of the Congress party. The pioneers for the promotion of Barang Sramik Sangh were two leftist leaders—Baidyanath Rath and Durga Charan Mohanty. Man Mohan Misra, also an outsider with leftist leanings, was the fountain head of inspiration for the formation of J. K. Paper Mills Employees Union. Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha was the handiwork of Dhuleswar Bastia. The two other important persons—Banka Bihari Das and Surendranath Dwivedi—who extended able support were also politically connected (PSP). Nityananda Panda, who was prominent among the person sponsoring the Bhaskar Textile Sramik Union, was a Marxist from outside the trade union ranks. The leader, Durga Prasad Guru, who was responsible for the emergence of Orient Paper Mills Sramik Congress was a prominent Congress worker. The persons into whose hands the leadership has passed shortly after its inception were also outsider politicians belonging to the Communist Party. The leaders were Man Mohan Misra, Krupasindhu Khuntia, Baidyanath Rath and Biswanath Mukherjee. Belpahar Refractories Employees Union was also the creation of outsiders. The main architects of this union were the well-known trade union duo, Michael John and V. G. Gopal, who owed their allegiance to the Congress party. The person who nourished and gave a functional shape to the UTUC—Affiliated Rourkela Workers Union was T. Dutta, a loftist worker.

In some cases the initiative to from a union came from a group of active workers, who due to their organisational inexperience and lack of legal knowledge sought the guidance of political leaders in the task of union organisation. The leader whom they approached mighr be an experienced trade unionist with a good grasp of workers' problems knowledge in trade union mechanice. Thus, in Paradip Port when there was a devastating cyclone in July 1964, five of the workers working at the break waters, were seriously injured and one died on the spot. Despite the accident being a major one, the management did not take notice of it. The injured narrated their tale of weal and woe to Nisamani Khuntia who was at that time the M. L. A. of the area. They not

only requested him to take up the issue with the management for compensation but also urged him to start a union. Thus came the Workcharged Employees Union which later changed its name to Paradip Port Workers Union. In the case of Ferrochrome Workers Union, some enthusiastic worker approached Prafulla Ghadei, a Congress worker, to form a union. In recognition of the help rendered by him, Ghadei was chosen as the founder President. Barbil Workers Union was also promoted in the same way. Though the initiative was taken by Jamini Ranjan Das, as employee of the Bolani Ores Limited, it was Janaki Ballav Patnaik and K. K. Giri of Congress (R) who provided guidance and helped in registration of the union. These two leaders were elected as the founder President and Vice-President respectively

There are also instances like the Hindusthan Aeronautics Employees Association, Indian Aluminium Company, Hirakud Workers' Employees Union etc. which were purely sponsored by workers themselves. But such cases are rare.

It is found that in about 48% of cases (the unions) studied, the initiative to form a union was taken by outsider politicians, in 39% of csses the guidance of the outside leaders was sought. And only in 13% of the cases, the union could be formed without the help and guidance of outsiders. Thus, the study lends support to the view that it is the help provided by the outsiders, most of whom are political leaders having distinct political and ideological orientations, rather than the unsatisfactory working conditions of labour or similar other factors, that is decisive in inducing workers to forms a union.

It is observed that there is penetration of politics into the activities of trade unions in Orissa. The President being an outsider having political links with some party or the other brings political complexion to the union activities. The leader and his party also seek to enlist the cooperation and support of the union members whenever the leader stands for any political or civic elections. Rourkela Mazdoor Sabha pledged its support through a specific resolution to its leader Rajkishore Samantray. when he sought election to the Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1967 from the Rourkela Constituency. Several Unions indulge in local politics. The Kalinga Mazdoor Union and Orissa Cement Mazdoor Sangha belong to this category.

Party-Union Linkage

On the basis of the relationship the Orissan trade unions have with the political parties, trade unions can broadly be classifiedi nto three main groups. Many important variations are formed among them. The first category includes the 'fully controlled unions' which are under complete sway of the political parties.

(i) Fully Controlled Unions

The union belonging to this group function as adjuncts of political parties. The unions are directed very often by interests and considerations that are extraneous to the professional interests of the workers. In most cases the unions draw their inpspiration from and owe their existence to the fraternal political organisation; for the political organisation is responsible either for the union's creation or for providing their organisational sustenance. It follows that the leadership flows from the parties and the outside political workers hold key positions inthe unions and thus control the union administrative apparatus. It may be possible that the rank and file leaders occupy a few positions in the union, but it is always the political workers, who exercise overall control on the union affairs.

The party decides the policies relating to the union in advance and tries to get their approval of the members of the union by manoeuvre and personal interests of party leaders. Neither the union executive nor the general body of members have any say in vital matters. In some cases the acceptance or approval of the members is taken for granted. Political workers perpetuate their 'rule' over the union by continuing as its leaders for long spells. Thus, it is not surprising, if the unions, are known more by the names of these leaders or political party[7] to which they belong than by the names of the unions themselves. The political parties prefer to work 'for' the unions than 'with' them.

Finance is another important means of controlling the unions. Though the unions are not obliged to officially declare the sources of income which they get through 'other sources' interviews with union leaders reveal that "other sources" include donations or contributions by the political party. It is not uncommon that when the union is in its formative stage, the

political party not only deputes organisers who are on its pay roll, but also provides the wherewithals required for carrying on the trade union business.

AITUC unions in Bhaskar Textile Mills, Utkal Machinery Ltd., Barsua Iron Ore Mines; HMS union in Rourkela Steel Plant and Mehenter Sangh, Cuttack; INTUC unions in Rourkela Steel Plant and Paradip Port; and UTUC unions in Rourkela can be cited as typical examples of the unions belonging to this category. In all these unions a very intimate relationship between the union and the party is found to exist. Most of key positions like President and General Secretary have been occupied by party workers.

(ii) Partially Controlled Unions

The unions that fall under this category are those that have come into existence, owing to organisational efforts of rank and file workers themselves or occasionally with the encouragement given by someone from outside who belongs to a party. The unions are said to function in the 'orbit of influence' of political parties and maintain a close liaison with the latter. The political leaders occupy only 'prestige' positions rather than 'key' offices, thus leaving the real leadership to the worker leaders. The union administration and finance rest squarely with the insiders. All policy decisions are taken by the union itself, but within the broad framework of the basic principles of the party with which it is associated. Not infrequently, the unions consult the party leadership before vital decision are taken. The parties extend moral and material support to these unions on a *'quid pro quo'* basis. The unions in return rally round and stand behind the parties when the occasion arises.

A good number of factory unions in Orissa belong to this category. Some typical case which fit into this description are – Kalinga Mazdoor Union, Gangpur Labour Union, Orient Paper Mills Sramik Congress, Rampur Colliery Mazdoor Congress, Orissa Cement Worker's Union etc. In these cases union offices are held by insiders, but many of these are frequent visitors to the party offices. They take active interest in the activities and changes that take place in the party. Prominent political leaders are invited to address union meetings. The real relationship comes into the force when the unions face crises, for instance, a

prolonged strike. On these occasions the parties back up their union and do whatever possible to meet the situation.

(iii) Neutral Unions

This category comprises of unions that are neutral and are able to maintain a fair degree of independence. The leadership of these unions is self generating; while some of the union leaders may be politically active, they will not allow union independence to be diluted or the style of functioning affected. Neutrality does not mean indifference towards political parties, nor does it mean renouncing politics completely. On the other hand, unions belonging to this category too, maintain contacts with political parties. Union-party relations are characterised by a clear understanding that they do not interfere in each other's activies. These union make no secret of their intention that any help from political parties is welcome only when such help is specifically sought. Union leaders maintain good connections with leaders of different political parties. Trade and economic interests of workers get precedence over political or other considerations in these unions Enlightened membership, regular subscriptions, stable leadership are some of the aspects that help these unions in maintaining independence. In Orissa, the unions which fit into the above description are found in banking, life insurance, newspaper and printing, railways (as for instance, railway ticket checking staff), aeronautics, aluminium, electrical employees, and so on.[8]

Political Unionism and Union Rivalry

One important consequence of political unionism is the multiplicity of unions and the accompanying rivalry among them. The labour movement in Orissa just as its counterpart at the national level, is characterised by divisions into competing camps on political lines. Even when they are required to cooperate on a limited scale, for example, forming ad-hoc fronts or city-wide combinations, to organise peaceful agitations or demonstrations, evidence of their unity efforts is not found. Orissan trade unions and labour leadership pull in different ideological directions making it difficult to develop a broad basis of trade union unity.

At lower levels,—the industry or plant—the problem is more serious and the inter-union relations are marked by hostility, mutual distrust and even violence. Plants or industrial establishments free from union rivalry are rare. A part from inter-union rivalry, cases of 'intera-union rivalry are also on the increase in Orissa in recent years. This is attributed, among other things, to political differences.

Conclusions

In Orissa, unions were closely aligned with political parties. About 54 per cent of the total union membership in the state was affiliated to party-controlled national labour federations. Many unions owed their origin to political parties. They were supported and sustained by leaders often belonging to some political party or the other. Political leaders continue to have their hegemony over the unions even at present. The political movement for the country's independence, the "Prajamandal" agitation for popular rule and the peasant uprisings under the leadership of the left parties have all helped in giving practical shape to the needs and aspirations of workers. It can be assumed that had there been no moral and material help from the political leadership in the formative years, the emergence of organised unionism in Orissa would have been further delayed, for workers were not in a position to assume responsibility for leading the movement by themselves. The interaction with political parties has generally helped trade unions by rapidly expanding unionism among different groups of workers and in imparting to them a measure of organisational stability. At the same time one gains the impreession that the unions have become somewhat subservient to the political parties. This has resulted in stifling the initiative of the unions to develop into independent and selfreliant entities with their own leadership and a self-generated force.

Political unionism has also led to multiplicity of unions and the resultant inter and intra union rivalry. These have aggravated the weakneses and the fragile base of unionism. It is realised that the party-union nexus is inevitable in a democratic set-up like ours. The benefits should flow both ways. There is no harm if trade unions become politically conscious or use political forces to

advance their job-related and economic interests. What is harmful for the unions is to play completely into the hands of political parties and allowing their own interests to be subordinated to those of the parties. The remedy lies in properly educating the workers and encouraging the process of internal leadership.

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STUDENT POLITICS IN ORISSA

Subash Hazary

The present study deals with the political participation of the students of Orissa, particularly in the post-Independence period. It studies their "On-Campus" as well as "Off-Campus" politics. It critically examines the various student movements and strikes, and the various techniques resorted to by student activists to put pressure upon authorities. For this study, a large number of respondents were interviewed. They were either student leaders or participants in student agitations one time or other. Further, the *Samaj* from 1966 to 1979, and some relevant government documents and reports have been examined for collection of data.

Student Political Participation

The norms concerning student political participation are rather conservative in India in as much as political activities both 'on-campus' and 'off-campus' are not considered the legitimate area of activity during student-hood. Quite often controversy has raged over the question, "Should students take part in politics" ? Such questions have been frequently raised in the post-Independence period when political leaders and public men exhorted students to depoliticize themselves after achievement of freedom for the country. Despite such exhortations and appeals student political participation continues to be a major determinant of off-campus politics.

College and University students have acted as a powerful pressure group and have loaded the educational and political system with numerous grievances and demands. The most common form of student political participation has been the so-called instances of unrest and 'indiscipline' ranging from peaceful protests to disruptive or violent strikes and agitations in such arenas as educational institutions, localities, regions and even states.

Another index of student political participation has been the

connections of student leaders and student unions with political parties and student political organizations. Political parties and personalities have openly organised, mobilised and recruited students as a social category and a political class by supporting student grievances and demands and by establishing student organizations and patronising student leaders.

Students have quite often actively participated in off-campus elections, namely, panchayat and municipal elections and elections to Legislative Assembly and the Lok Sabha. Politically-oriented students have participated intensely in electioneering. Almost all political parties organized youth and students to be in the vanguard of their electoral battles.

Yet another index of student participation in politics has been the use of the campus as a base for recruitment of political leaders by political parties. Quite a sizeable section of the political leadership in Orissa owes its impetus to student leadership. In a developing society with a low level of literacy, it is quite natural for political parties to find recruits from among the modern, educated and politically conscious element of the society.

Students have openly fought for certain broad societal issues. They have voluntarily joined mass demonstrations and public protests organized by other non-student organizations on issues affecting their locality, region or even the entire state. This readiness for activity as a political class is a growing phenomenon in Orissa.

Most student political activity is "interest oriented"[1] because conditions in institutions of higher education are far from ideal and "represent the most direct and pressing experience of a student's year". The long catalogue of physical deficiencies with which non-professional colleges are beset quite naturally generate the grievances which are the immediate cause of most student unrests. Thus most student strikes and acts of 'indiscipline' are campus-oriented and the demands are directly addressed to college and University authorities. Nonetheless the grievances and demands have taken on a political character in as much as these involve huge public expenditure for their satisfaction. What starts as a pressure on academic authorities slowly builds up into a confrontation with the government for the amelioration of grievances and fulfilment of urgent demands. Thus most of the

student political activities are indicative of the role of students as pressure groups to promote their own interests.

Student Agitations and Movements in Orissa : High Lights

The freedom movement had an electrifying impact on the students in Orissa. More specifically, student movement in Orissa started with the non-cooperation movement in 1920. Several students left school and college to join the national movement. Prominent among them were Dr. H. K. Mahtab, Jadumani Mangaraj and Naba Krishna Choudhury. Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, was the centre of most of the agitations. All Orissa Student Conferences were held with the full cooperation of teachers and students.

Broadly speaking, prior to 1936 there were two main streams in Orissa politics. One was the demand for separate statehood for Orissa and the other was participation in the Freedom Movement. There was a feeling at the all India level that there was no separate identity of Oriya language and culture. Madhusudan Das took up leadership to fight for this autonomy and identity. Pandit Gopabandhu Dash was the Chief leader of the freedom movement in Orissa.[2] During the "Utkal Sammilani" days (Utkal Union Conference—an annual forum of the Oriyas to articulate their grievances and needs) the demand was for the unification of all Oriya-speaking regions either under Bengal or the Central Provinces but not under Bihar or Madras. The demand for a separate province for Oriyas came later and materialised in 1936. After that the demand focussed on the merger of all Oriya-speaking regions. Prior to 1936, students in Orissa were more involved in nationalist movement than in the unification movement.[3]

In 1924 when the All Orissa Students Conference was to have a meeting in Cuttack an attempt was made by the collector and commissioner to dissuade students from attending it. Despite governmental hostility, the conference was held in Ravenshaw College (East Hostel) and a resolution of protest was passed against the government measure. Students used to attend all the political meetings in the Town-Hall, Cuttack and the meetings organized by the 'Utkal Sahitya Samaj'. The 1928-29 All Orissa Students Conference held at Balasore focussed on the unification of all Oriya-speaking regions.

During the Salt Satyagrah (1930-31), Rama Devi and Malati Devi, two prominent women leaders of Orissa led a hunger strike in front of the Ravenshaw College gate. Students came out of the campus and gave a send off to the leaders who went out for Salt Campaign at the Zobra Ghat, Cuttack. Students organised a strike and boycotted their classes for a few days.

Many such incidents of student protest against the repressive measures of the British Raj and student support for and involvement in nationalist movement took place in Orissa. Besides, students played their part in the 'Unification' Movement which aimed at the creation of a separate province for Oriyas.

The formation of the Orissa unit of the AISF in 1936 was a watershed in the history of student politics in Orissa. It gave them a platform and a forum for articulating the needs and grievances of the students of Orissa and valuable instrument for organizing themselves into collective action. In course of time, an agitation to get a college union continued in Ravenshaw College and as a result a college union was formed in 1938. The college union is to be the "sole tribune of the students' opinion inside the College". With this, student unionism started in Orissa and the right to form a college union was extended to other colleges.

The Medical School strike, in early 1939, was the first major test of students' unity and determination in Orissa. The Medical School students were on a strike for some of the academic demands. The then Congress ministry took stern action and expelled two students, namely Motilal Tripathy and Narasingha Samant Singhar for political activity. The Medical School was closed. It spread to other educational institutions in the State. Students of Cuttack courted arrest through picketing in front of the Secretariat. The agitation continued for one month and five days. After a compromise, the expelled students were taken in. It brought about a unique solidarity among the students of Orissa.[4]

Pandit Nehru's Presidential address at the Lahore Session of the AICC in 1929 had exhorted the countrymen to observe January Twenty-sixth as Independence Day. Students of Ravenshaw College were inspired by a nationlist fervour to observe it on January 26, 1940. Two students, Bibudhendu Misra and Nilamoni Routray hoisted the Congress Flag atop the Ravenshaw College

Building. They were expelled from the College and debarred from taking the ensuing University Examination. Students decided for a protest strike which continued upto 25th February and thereafter on the eve of the University Examination they decided to boycott the examination. In an unprecedented bonfire the admit cards of the students were committed to the flames. More than half of the students appeared at the examination due to governmental pressure. The strike was suppressed, and about 18 cases were registered against activist students. The strike had spread to all other educational institutions in the State.

The Quit India Movement of August 1942 brought in a good deal of student participation. By this time many students were ready to assume the leadership of the Congress and other parties when the adult leaders were either jailed or went underground. Students of Ravenshaw College burnt the college office. Many students suffered long periods of arrest and detention. Student participation in the Quit India Movement was the high water mark of their sacrifice for the cause of the motherland. Another all Orissa strike started from Ravenshaw College during 1946-47. On 12 December 1946, the Darbar Day (Annual Sports Day of the College) the Union Jack was hoisted. Under the leadership of Manmohan Misra, Basant Misra, Janaki Ballav Patnaik, the Union. Jack was pulled down and the national flag hoisted in its place When punitive action was taken against the leaders, students protested and launched the strike. It spread to Cuttack town and other parts of Orissa. After the strike the Congress Ministry in Orissa decided against hoisting the Union Jack on the campus. The Strike was symbolic of the militant nationalism that imbued the spirit of the students of the time.

The fifties witnessed two major all Orissa student agitations. The first, known as the 'Anti-Fee-rise strike' was organized during July 1951 against the governmental decision to raise tuition fees for college students. It was an all-Orissa strike. There was Satyagraha Dharna in front of the Legislative Assembly on July 17 and 18, 1951. The authorities retaliated by the *sine die* closure of all colleges from July 19, 1951. Student leaders were arrested under the Preventive Detention Act and suffered jail sentences. Some student leaders lost one valuable academic year on account of the strike. The strike achieved partial results. There was

some reduction in fees. Free Studentship was increased from 7½ per cent to 12½ per cent. Governmental grant for S. S. G. funds in colleges was also increased.[5]

A more virulent and widespread movement was in the offing. This was the SRC Movement, more specifically, the movement against the Report of the States Reorganization Commission, 1956. This was a popular movement of the Oriyas demanding the merger of Sareikala and Kharaswan with Orissa. A coordination committee consisting of representatives of all political parties and various organizations was formed to direct the movement. This included student leaders. On 21 July, 1956 there was picketing in front of the Radio Station, Cuttack. Many leaders including students were arrested. Some students lost their life in police firing. The movement came to an end due to the apathy of the Central Congress leadership and split in the Action Committee resulting in the defection of some members. In a crucial meeting of the council of action under the presidentship of Girija Bhushan Patnaik, a student leader, it was decided to call off the movement on 26 July. The SRC Movement (The 'Sima Andolan') was a short but intense agitation of the people of Orissa in which students played a vanguard role. True, the movement did not succeed in achieving its objective but it demonstrated the solidarity, resilience and maturity of students to spearhead a movement for a broader off-campus issue.

The magnitude and intensity of students' agitation in Orissa in September-November, 1964 which sparked off from a trifling incident at a certain radio shop known as 'Majestic Radio Shop' at station bazar, Cuttack, were rather unprecedented. On 26 September, 1964, Sasankadhar Das, a student of Cuttack Engineering School, went to the said radio shop to take delivery of his radio-set which he had given for repair. There was some hot exchange of words between the shop-owner and the student over non-payment of some old dues. In the course of the quarrel, the shop owner allegedly assaulted the student and forced him to write a pronote. Next day the police took action as a batch of students from Engineering School and Ravenshaw College stormed the shop in retaliation. And the movement started; in course of time the focus of the agitation shifted from the immediate cause to protest against police excesses and ministerial corruption, and the wrath

of the agitators was directed at the Chief Minister, Biren Mitra. Biju Patnaik and other ministers and officers who were considered favourites of the Chief Minister.[6]

This all-Orissa student movement which lasted for nearly two months from 26 September to 24 November, 1964 had the support of all the opposition parties and the sympathy of the general public. Among others the student agitation was led by Bhagabat Behera, Pramod Chandra Samantarai, Abhoy Chandra Mohapatra and late Loknath Acharya.

The student agitation in 1964 was illustrative of the fact that "It is possible for ad hoc student agitation in an area relatively free of student unrest to be successfully organised". It is typical of many student unrests in several parts of India and elsewhere in as much as it started from a trivial issue but gained momentum to become a massive student agitation against police excesses and corrupt ministry.

The 1964 agitation had far-reaching consequences. It gave a severe jolt to the Congress Party in Orissa. A Chief Minister, severely discredited, had finally to resign on the charge of "administrative impropriety". The Congress Party was miserably defeated in the 1967 Assembly election. Anti-Congress feeling, generated during the student agitation, seemingly influenced the voting behaviour of the people in 1967.

The 1964 agitation is a watershed in the history of student politics in Orissa. It signalled the entry of political parties into campus politics in a big way. Students played an active role in electioneering in 1967 and all subsequent elections. After 1964 political personalities became conscious that students were a force to reckon with. Political parties vied with one another to build strong bases on the campuses and some spent lavishly for college union elections. The growing politicisation of the campuses in Orissa is, to a large extent, the legacy of the 1964 agitation.

A student strike affecting most of the colleges of Orissa continued for about two months from 22 August to 26 October 1969. The strike was due to a chain of events which originated from the S.C.B. Medical College, Cuttack. Earlier students of this college had taken resort to a strike in protest against the transfer of a Professor to Burla. They had gone to Bhubaneswar to press their

demands and were allegedly beaten by the police and fifty of them were arrested. This was a period of widespread unrest in quite a number of colleges and on 19 August a meeting of student leaders of all colleges was organized to protest against police atrocities on student strikers and demand the unconditional release of all arrested students.

A review of the land marks in student political activism in Orissa indicates that students of Orissa were capable of expressive political activity despite their tendency to withdraw from active politics during normal times. There have been quite a few all Orissa student movements which have exerted a tremendous impact on the larger political sphere and brought popular governments to their toes. At other times when students of a particular college have gone on strike on various grievances and demands they have evoked the sympathy and cooperation of the local public and sympathetic statements from student leaders and token strikes by students of other campuses.

During the seventies there has not been an all Orissa student agitation. After the establishment of the Berhampur and the Sambalpur Universities in 1967 there seems to be a decline in the unity and fraternity of the students of Orissa. Until 1969, Cuttack city was the nerve centre of the state-wide student agitations and Ravenshaw College Union had taken leadership. In course of time Berhampur and Sambalpur became centres for articulating and ventilating the grievances and demands of students of the southern and western regions of Orissa respectively. Regionalism has increased so much that students of University resent and prevent the admission of students from other areas not covered by the University. Now issues of common concern are taken by students of colleges covered by a University rather than students of the entire state. Again, the number of colleges has increased to such an extent that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to mobilise students in the entire state on some common issue or 'cause'. Moreover, no student political organization enjoys a complete sway over all the campuses in the state and at best their influence is confined to some pocket. The want of all Orissa student political organizations has deprived student politics of a common programme, unified leadership, effective communication and speedy mobilisation.

Student Strikes in Orissa

A Content Analysis of Press Reports from 1966-1979[7]; Table 1 is illustrative of the issues involved in student strikes in different educational institutions of the state. Seven broad groups of issues have been suggested, namely, social, economic, politico-administrative, educational, non-educational (demands upon non-University authorities on issues of special concern), normal protests or causes and sproadic, generally unorganized outbursts by students only vaguely associated with concrete demands. Only demands and grievances which have led to strikes resulting in total or partial disruption of normal academic work on a campus have been analysed. The identification of issues over which students have most often resorted to strikes is important in order to have a thorough understanding of the focus of student agitational politics in the state over the last fourteen years.

Social issues include larger political movements and public demands with which students are voluntarily associated. In the orissa situation, students have fought for such social issues as demand for merger of all Oriya-Speaking regions in the state, a second steel plant,, more railway tracts, protest against mistreatment of Oriyas outside the state, demand for early implementation of Oriya as official language and protest against increase in bus fare.

With regard to economic issues students have taken the initiative to agitate over high prices, black-marketing, hoarding, profiteering etc. They have succeeded in drawing prompt governmental response to tackle such economic offences. Students have demanded better employment opportunities for Oriyas in the state including reservations of certain percentage of jobs in both central and state government offices and undertakings.

Strikes over politico-administrative issues included protest against political corruption, political harrassment of students, arrest of student leaders, police excesses and atrocities, any unfavourable report of commissions of enquiry and demand for punitive action against a group of fellow students for unlawful activity, withdrawal of cases against students and for judicial enquiry into police excesses.

As Table 1 illustrates, out of 432 issues during the period edu-

Table—1. Issues involved in Students 'Strikes, from 1966 to 1976. Under Each issue the frequencies and the percentages (within brackets) for that particular year are presented.

Year	Social	Economic	Politico-administrative	Educatinal	Non-educational	Moral	Sporadic outbursts.	TOTAL	Year wise rank
1966	2 (4.3)	4 (8.6)	6 (13)	27 (58.6)	2 (4.3)	0 (0)	5 (10.8)	46	4
1967	4 (16)	1 (4)	1 (4)	15 (60)	4 (16)	0 (0)	0 (0)	25	7
1968	0 (0)	3 (15)	0 (0)	15 (75)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (10)	20	9.5
1969	1 (6.2)	1 (6.2)	3 (18.7)	10 (67.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (6.2)	16	12
1970	2 (13.3)	0 (0)	1 (6.6)	9 60)	1 (6.6)	0 (0)	2 (13.3)	15	13
1971	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5.8)	14 (82.3)	0 (0)	1 (5.8)	1 (1.8)	17	11
1972	0 (0)	1 (4.3)	1 (4.3)	18 (78.2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (13)	23	8
1973	0 (0)	1 (1.6)	8 (12.9)	47 (75.8)	2 (3.2)	0 (0)	4 (6.4)	62	1
1974	0 (0)	4 (9.5)	13 (30.9)	23 (54.7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (4.7)	42	5
1975	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (5)	13 (65)	3 (15)	0 (0)	3 (15)	20	9.5
1976	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0	14
1977	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (5.8)	27 (79.4)	3 (8.8)	0 (0)	2 (5.8)	34	6
1978	1 (1.6)	0 (0)	1 (1.6)	55 (91.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (5)	60	2
1979	1 (1.9)	4 (7.6)	5 (9.6)	37 (71.1)	4 (7.6)	0 (0)	1 (1.9)	52	3
Total	11 (2.5)	19 (4.3)	43 (9.9)	310 (71.7)	19 (4.3)	1 (.23)	29 (6.7)	432	
Issue wise Rank	6	4.5	2	1	4,5	7	3		

cational issues account for 310. The aim of many recent protest activites has been to protect the interests of students as students. This is the type of collective action that has quite often enlisted the support of the largest number of students, as educational problems have impinged on them all. Such academic-educational issues include a wide variety : demand for better physical facilities including library, laboratory, common room, sanitary arrangements auditorium, play grounds, improvement in hostel facilities, more hostels, an increase in number of seats in various classes and subjects, opening of new subjects, new colleges, new University, recognition of a college, government-take over of private colleges, more stipends, raising the amount of stipends, scholarships, study loans, exemption of tuition and examination fees for students coming from areas affected by natural calamities, dissatisfaction with stiff questions in the examination, poor results, medium of instruction, college administration, rustication of some students, demands for more teachers to fill up vacancies, for transfer of a Principal or a teacher. The physical deficiencies very legitimately get into the lists of demands, whenever there is an unrest in any college.

No strike has occurred on Orissa campuses over what is termed as moral protests or "causes".[8] Of course students have demanded American withdrawal from Vietnam and recognition of Vietnam and Bangladesh in public meetings. Such moral issues in the Indian situation as poverty, casteism (untouchbility), communalism have not been the pivots around which sustained movements were organised. If protest against political corruption and police excesses could be considered as moral issues, students in Orissa must be credited with them.

Quite a few strikes have occurred over demands upon off-campus (non-educational) authorities on issues of special concern. Thus students have fought for special concession rates on buses and trains. They have demanded better bus service to colleges and bus stop and passenger halt near the institution for certain trains.

Lastly, strikes have occurred now and then as a result of "sporadic, generally, unorganized outbursts by students only vaguely associated with concrete demands", such as walkouts on examination in protest againts stiff or out-of-course question,

attempts by students to ride on buses and trains without paying fares, beatings inflicted by students on ticket collectors, bus conductors, infighting between two groups of students on some trivial issue, fights between students of different colleges after a football or cricket match, student protest against prevention of malpractice in examinations sometimes resulting in protests and assaults on principals and teachers and other acts of delinquency. Such sporadic outbursts have sometimes erupted into uncontrolled violence and major agitations in the past. These instances which have increased in frequecncy are indicative of the physically oriented release of students' energies which are not properly utilized in extra-curricular activities.

There was no student strike thoughout 1976. (see Table 1) The period of internal emregency covering June 1975-January 1977 was a lean one from the point of view of student agitational politics in Orissa. Elections to the college unions were not held during the academic session 1975-76, and indirect election was held during 1976-77. Strikes as a normal and frequent technique of student politics came to disuse during emergency. It seemed as if a moratorium on strikes and agitations was declared by the Government.

Table 2 gives a comparative estimate of 41 representative colleges in Orissa belonging to three categories *viz.*, professional, government and private with regard to number of strikes during the period 1966-1979. The period 1966-70 was the most turbulent in as much as out of a total number of 757 strikes 379 took place during this period. The general assumption that professional institutions are less prone to student agitations and unrest does not hold good in the Orissa situation. Such professional colleges as Engineering College, Burla, Medical College, Burla, Veterinary Science College, College of Agriculture, S.C.B. Medical College, Cuttack and Engineering School, Cuttack compare quite favourably with such 'high' unrest non-professional (general) colleges, both Government and private as Christ, Ravenshaw, Khallikote, M.S. Law, Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, G.M and Kendrapada. It has been found that generally strikes are more prolonged in professional institutions.

Student demands in general colleges pertain mostly to improvement of physical facilities and the catalogue of demands put

Table—2. Number of student strikes in Forty one representative college in Orissa belonging to three categories viz., professional (Medical, Engineering, Agriculture, Vet. Sc. and Teacher Traning colleges), Government and Private colleges during the period 1966-1979.

Rank 1	Name of the college.	1966-70	1971-75	1976-79	Total	Rank	% of grand total of strikes.
1.	Christ	11	9	4	24	1	3.17
2.	Engineering coll, Burla	9	4	7	20	1	2.64
3.	Ravenshaw	12	4	4	20	1	2.64
4.	Khallikote	9	5	5	19	2	2.50
5.	K.S. Law College, Cuttack.	7	6	5	18	3	2.37
6.	V.S.S. Medical, Burla.	8	7	2	17	2	2.24
7.	Bhadrak	9	4	2	16	4	2.11
8.	Dhenkanal	9	1	6	16	5	2.11
9.	Veterianary Sc. Bhubaneswar.	8	6	1	15	3	1.98
10.	College of Agri., Bhubaneswar	8	5	2	15	5	1.98
11.	G.M. College, sambalpur	6	7	2	15	6	1.98
12.	Kendrapara coll.	6	6	3	15	2	1.98
13.	S.C.B. Medical college, Cuttack	7	5	2	14	5	1.84
14.	S.C.S., Puri	8	4	1	13	7	1.71
15.	Eng. School, Cutt.	7	2	3	12	6	1.58
16.	Sc. College, Rourkela	7	3	2	12	8	1.58
17.	Stwart Sc. College, Cuttack	6	3	2	11	3	1.45
18.	P.G. Deptts Utkal University	1	6	3	10	9	1.32
19.	F.M., Balasore	5	2	3	10	10	1.32
20.	Bhabanipatna	7	1	2	10	11	1.32

Table—2. contd.

Rank	Name of the college.	1966-70	1971-75	1976-79	Total	Rank	% of the 2 grand Total number of strikes
21.	Jagatsingpur	5	4	1	10	4	1.32
22.	Parlakhemundi	7	2	1	10	12	1.32
23.	Khurda	4	4	1	9	5	1.18
24.	Nayagarh	5	4	0	9	6	1.18
25.	S.K.C.G. Medical college, Berhampur	6	2	1	9	7	1.18
26.	Jaipur	6	2	1	9	13	1.18
27.	Phulbani	7	1	1	9	14	1.18
28.	Bargarh	6	2	0	8	15	1.05
29.	Angul	4	2	2	8	16	1.05
30.	Rav. Evening	4	2	2	8	17	1.05
31.	Engineering, Rourkela	6	1	1	8	8	1.05
32.	B.J.B., BBSR	4	2	1	7	18	0.92
33.	Rajendra Coll. Bolangir	5	0	2	7	19	0.92
34.	M.P.C., Baripada	4	2	1	7	20	0.92
35.	Ramadevi, BBSR	6	1	0	7	21	0.92
36.	S.B. Women's coll. Cuttack	4	1	2	7	22	0.92
37.	N.C. College Jaipur	5	0	2	7	23	0.92
38.	Keonjar	4	1	1	6	24	0.79
39.	Salepur	4	2	0	6	7	0.79
40.	Radhanath Training, CTC	3	0	1	5	9	0.52
41.	Baisa SC. Coll. BBSR	2	0	2	4	10	0.52
	Total	251 (54.4)	125 (27.1)	85 (18.4)	461 (100)		60.89
	Other colleges	128 (43.2)	66 (22.3)	102 (34.4)	296 (100)		30.10

Table—2. contd.

Grand Total	379 (50.06)	191 (25.23)	187 (24.7)	757 (100)	100

Rank 1 is based on the ranking of all the Forty one colleges irrespective of categories.

Rank 2 is based on the ranking of the colleges with in a category.

forth by various colleges have a familiar ring about them. Students of professional colleges have quite often resorted to strikes on the issue of job security after graduation. They have suggested, from time to time, new areas for creation of posts to absorb unemployod graduates. Such demands sound more 'economic' than educational. S.C.B. Medical College and Burla Medical College have, on more than one occasion been the scene of infighting between two groups of students. Burla has witnessed violent clashes between students of the Medical College and the Engineering College resulting in loss of life and property. Similarly students of the colleges of Agriculture and Veterinary Science under the O.U.A.T have clashed in the past. Such organized attacks on one another have detracted from the prestige of the basically career-oriented professional institutions.

Dispite better physical facilities government colleges are no less prone to unrest and acts of indiscipline than are private colleges. In quite a large number of private colleges deficiencies in academic facilities are so many and in some of them, they are of such serious nature that serious academic work is out of question. The governing bodies of such colleges are victims of local politics and are rent asunder by strifes and dissensions. Under such unenviable circumstances students of almost all the private colleges of the state have demanded that Government should take over the colleges. Such demands often leading to strikes have been supported by the management and the sympathetic local public.

Constructive Activities of Students

It is generally assumed that student politics is co-extensive with agitational politics, protest activities, disruptive tactics and extra-

legal techiniques. This is due to the fact that more often in public discussions and press reports incidents of student protests and agitations are highlighted rather than the constructive activities of students.

Students of Orissa have rendered many useful services to the Community from time to time. Students have rendered help in collecting and distributing relief materials among flood, cyclone and drought affected people. During the war with China and Pakistan they volunteered to maintain internal peace and order, donated and collected money for the National Defence Fund and donated blood for the jawans.

During July-August, 1966 students spearheaded a movement against price rise. This was an eye opener to the Government and 'Citizens Committees' were set up at the district and subdivision levels and various towns and cities. The social service guilds in the three Medical Colleges have regularly collected blood and other necessaries for the poor and needy patients. Students of the colleges of Agriculture and Veterinary Science have shared their technical knowledge with people of the rural areas.

In 1970, students played a vanguard's role in demading a second steel plant for Orissa which enjoyed the active support of the people of the state. They have also demanded more railway tracts for Orissa. They have, from time to time, articulated the grievances of the general public and demanded due consideration from the Central Government for the economic development of Orissa.

Students have organised meetings and symposia to discuss reforms in the educational system. Some of the crying needs of the colleges have been duly met by education authorities and the State Government as a result of the persistent demands of the students. The establishment of the Berhampur and Sambalpur Universities owed most to the demands of the student community with adequate backing from the local population.

Some student organizations have organized labour camps (Shrama Sibirs) in backward, rural areas of the state. In recent years college students are taking part in constructive activities in an organized way under the National Social Service (N. S. S.) programme.

Despite their involvement in such constructive activites, stu-

dents have not rendered these services regulary. Students have seldom come forward to fight poverty, illiteracy casteism. communalism, price rise, black marketing, political corruption, red-tapism on a war footing. The vast potentialities of students' energy and idealism for constructive and nation-building activities are yet to be harnessed.

Electoral Politics on the Campus

Recruitment of leaders is an important aspect of politics in any context. Electoral politics on the campus is a key component of the student government in Orissa. Student electoral behaviour provides a valuable insight into the general political behaviour and culture of the students and provides a glimpse of the campus politics.

Election to the students union and various other associations is a leading event on the campus which provides impetus to the politicisation of the students. The campaign techniques followed by the contestants on various campuses in Orissa are a clever blend of the following : Appealing to the students in the class-room with brief speaches; Appealing to them in the "Why I stand for" meeting; person to person approach; meeting the voters with supporters; leaflets, pamphlets and posters, appealing on the basis of political affiliation (either political party or student wing of a political party); appealing on the basis of class, faculty (Art, Science, Commerce etc., in a general college), Department, Residence (Boarder or Day scholar) etc., facilitating the admission of new entrants into the college and hostel; raising important issues on the eve of the election and various strong arm methods.

An empirical study of three student union elections in Ravenshaw College, Cuttuck the premier educational institution of the State in 1977, 1978, and 1979 has shown more or less a consistent trend in electoral behaviour and politics on the campus. The following features and trends are more or less applicable to other Orissa campuses with slight variations.

Most of the contestants are students from middle or lower middle class families with a rural background. It is a concomitant of the changing social base of the student population. In fact, the vast majority of students in Orissa come from middle

class families with a rural background. Students from rural areas are usually inmates of the college hostels which add impetus to their politicization.

It is quite natural that most of the contestants are inmates of the college hostels. Hostels life provides training in community life and self-government. A boarder's greater freedom from family control stimulates his interest to enter into the campus electoral battles.

On most of the campuses in Orissa students of academic excellence, the so-called University toppers rarely fight elections. Such student are career-oriented and do to not like to fritter away their time and energy in campus politics. Similarly students of science take lesser interest in electoral contests presumbly because of the demanding curriculm and better job prospects.

It has been found that political parties and student political organizations are actively involved in elections on most of the campuses in Orissa. Almost every political party has a student wing, a front organization of students. Since campus political behaviour has directly or indirectly impinged on state politics at large, causing sufficient concern and embarassment to powers-that be, various political parties, personalities and student political organizations are actively engaged in winning the support of the student mass through their duly elected representatives. Almost every political party regards the student leaders as potential recruits.

The involvement of political parties through their student wings in college union elections has made the campus atmosphere tense often resulting in violence. There are weighty reasons to believe that some student contestant sponsored by student political organizations receive monetary help from political parties and personalities. The lavish expenditure and vulgar display in compaigning bear burning testimony to outside financial support.

The campaign techniques of student contestants have a large measure of commonality marked by certain institutional variations. Apart from the common methods of wooing the voters, there are certain irrational and disturbing trends. Particularistic factors such as region, language, class, faculty, residence (boarder or day scholar) do seem to influence voting behaviour on quite a large number of campuses. Contestants have appealed

to these narrow susceptibilities of their electors in some crucial contest.

Multiple factors determine voting behaviour on the Orissa campuses. These include : personality of the candidate, oratory, good academic career, organizational net work, past service, suffering of the candidate, active participation in agitations excellence in extra-curricular activities, supports of political party student organisations, and some particularistic factors. The choice of candidates on the basis of personality remains far from an ideal so far as electoral behaviour on most of the campuses regarding most of the posts are concerned. Each one of the factors outlined above has played its part in crucial electoral contests. Ideological orientation and commitment of the candidates are yet to make a significant impact on the student voters in general.

It has been noticed that women students seldom come forward to contest union elections in co-educational institutions. But this phenomenon cannot be related to their a political nature. In a more or less conservative society there might be a feeling among lady students that their participation in contests would not be approved by their parents and society. They also lack the gust and confidence to expose themselves to politics which at times borders on vulgarity, violence and third degree methods. The strain of convassing in big colleges is great for any lady contestant.

One disconcerting trend in student electoral politics is the capture of the college unions by a growing number of academically indifferent but otherwise very active and enthusiastic students who have been functioning the unions "more or less as trade unions and pressure groups". It is not their interests in politics but their interest in a career which attracts such students into politics. "Generally, the elections for these offices are fought on party lines and all the techniques of electioneering are adopted.[9]" College unions meant for training in elementary principles of self-government and in organizing cultural and curricular affairs have increasingly taken on a political character.

THE TECHNIQUES OF STUDENTS POLITICS

The question of 'means', mere simply, the methods and techni-

ques to achieve the desired objectives is as important in student politics as in other areas of activity. Seldom ideal conditions have existed on the campus where the means have been well-proportioned to the end.

The techniques of student protest in Orissa are multifarious depending on the nature of the institution, the issues involved and the response of the authorities. Most of the student protest activities have made use of more than one technique of protest. In prolonged strikes and agitations almost all the techniques outlined below have been tried.

The most peaceful technique has been the appeal to the college authorities, especially the Principal, through talks, petition and representation. The Annual Report presented by the Secretary College Union, provides a list of demands and grievances which are placed before the authorities and the invited guests (which includes ministers, political leaders and administrators). On occasions of serious nature memoranda have been presented to the President of India, Union Minister, the Chairman, U.G.C and other dignitaries. There is little doubt that the most persistent object of student protest and pressure has been the Principal of a college.

A very common and easily available technique of student politics is the frequent highlighting of the issues in the press. By this students build pressure on the appropriate authorities, sometimes compelling them to issue press statements and take steps to ameliorate grievances. Student leaders have called press conferences to highlight their demands.

Students also issue notices and ultimata to the Government (which are published in news papers) for the redressal of their grievances within a fixed period of time.

To build support for a cause or demand from the general mass of students, college union office bearers and other student leaders organize meetings on the campus. They deliver fiery speeches, sometimes dramatize issues and events and highlight their own point of view. Periodical meetings are also organized to keep the general body of students abreast of developments in the course of a prolonged agitation.

Demonstration is a usual form of protest. Students demonstrate before the principal's office to pressurize him to take app-

ropriate action. They also demonstrate in the streets holding placards and shouting wild slogans in vindication of their demands. They go round the town or city in processions to attract the local public's attention and sympathy.

Delegations of students leaders meet the Ministers, the University authorities, eminent public men and administrators to press their demands. Students from such distant places as Sambalpur, Rourkela, Parlakhemundi have come to the capital to confer with appropriate authorities,. Students of colleges in and near the capital have come in large numbers to pressurize the authorities to take prompt action. Students from such far off places as Bhadrak and Berhampur (more than 140 kms from the capital) have come either walking or cycling all the way to Bhubaneswar to put forth their demands. Such arduous journey is undertaken to display their determination and to draw the sympathy of students in other colleges and of the general public.

In periods of protest students have won spontaneous sympathy from opposition parties and have adequately briefed members of the opposition so that story questions have been raised on the floor of the Assembly forcing the Government to issue statements and press notes in support of measures taken by them. In localised campus unrests the local M.L.A. is pressurized to take up the cause of his local college to the appropriate authorities.

Students have taken resort to picketing and 'dharana' in front of government offices including the collectorate, the state Secretariat, and the residences of the Chief Minister and other concerned ministers. These are obstructionist tactics to pressurize the powers that be to take early action. Gherao and heckling have come to stay as instruments of student protest since the late sixties. Vice-Chancellor, members of Syndicate and principals have been gheraoed in the past. It is not uncommon for some students to jeer at and heckle educational authorities.

Strikes are a common form of student protest. It has different degrees of intensity as per the demands of the occasion. The simplest form of strike has been the boycotting of the classes and college examinations. Token strikes are organized to demonstrate sympathy for the 'cause' of one or more aggrieved colleges. When demands are not promptly met or steps taken by the authorities are not acceptable, some students including some union

office bearers go on a hunger strike, quite often threatening to go on hunger strike to death.

Student leaders of various colleges located in a town or city have organized public meetings in support of their demands. On numerous occasions, student protesters have given a call for 'bandh' in their city or town and have got favourable response from the local public. Such 'bandhs' have succeeded primarily because of the convergence of students' and local public's demands.

There have been numerous instances of collective protest and action by students of various colleges. Collective decision is taken by such committees as the "City Students Action Council". "District Students Council of Action", and in issues affecting most part of the State, "Orissa Students Council of Action" Such collective action in decision-making and management of a strike has demonstrated the unity and strength of the student community and had a salutary impact on power that be.

There have been occasions of violence in student agitations which has resulted in physical assault, throwing stones at the police, destruction of college records, burning building and buses and bombing. Law enforcement officers have quite often reacted ineptly or over-reacted in dealing with student agitators.

There has been a progressive erosion of norms as to the techniques employed in student politics. "Drastic actions like strikes" says Edward Shils, ". . . . physical assaults on teachers are undertaken on a variety of causes which seem disproportionately slight in comparison with the passion and fashion of their espousal". Quite often students have deprived themselves of the sympathy of the teachers, parents and the general public by resorting to wrong strategy or extreme techniques to achieve their objectives. This unconcerned neglect of the appropriate and proper techniques of protest has considerably diluted the substance and propriety of their grievances and demands.

TRENDS OF STUDENT MOVEMENTS IN ORISSA

The most dramatic fact in student politics since Independence is the almost complete collapse of the student movement as it was known prior to Independence. The growth of the national move-

ment had stimulated the over all political awareness and activism of the student community. Student movements of the 1930's and 1940's show the maximum efforts of a value and societal orientation of the student movement.

There has been a decline of ideological politics since Independence. Student political activism has demonstrated a shift of emphasis from political affairs and the broader social issues to campus-oriented or educational issues, sometimes of a rather ephemeral nature. One of the trends in student politics in Orissa, as in most other parts of the country, is that sporadic agitations have taken the place of movements. The frequent strikes, demonstrations and other acts of protest cannot be characterized as student movements.

Commenting on the shape of student activism in the post-1965 period, Philip G. Altbach has outlined three general trends of student involvement in broader political movements which have a firm ideological base, as is most graphically reflected in West Bengal and in groups like the All India Students' Federatian". Student involvement in political campaigns based on outside demands and issues, such as the language agitation in Tamilnadu or the anticorruption efforts of the Orissa students, and finally student involvement in sporadic demonstrations, unrest and indiscipline related to local, collegiate and academic matters. Students activism in Orissa has so far reflected the second and the third trends. While students in Orissa have taken a moderate political stance on many issues and have generally remained quiet and uninvolved politically, they have displayed tremendous organizing ability and intense political involvement at least on three occasions since Independence, namely, the anti-fee rise strike in 1951, the 'Sima-Andolan in 1956 and the massive state-wide strike in 1964 against the Mitra Government. But these instances of effective, but sporadic and diffuse political action by students do not indicate the emergence of an ongoing student movement. Most of the student protest activities in Orissa have been orginized over campus-oriented issues although occasionally student leaders have skill-fully manipulated the course of an agitation to transform it into a society oriented one.

Thus student movements in Orissa have generally tended to be rather non-ideological in their approach to issues and events.

Even those student agitations led by politically sophisticated students have stressed interests and issues, not ideologies. This is the general trend of student politics in India as revealed in a study, "Student Politics and National Politics in India" undertaken by L.I. Rudolph, S.H. Rudolph and Karuna Ahmed.[10] Most student's political activity is interest and issue-oriented because conditions and events in the Colleges are bad—bad food, crowded hostels, lack of proper physical facilities, poor and indifferent teaching, defective and in-appropriate instruction and examination and these generate grievances leading to most of the student unrests.

A continuous student movement is yet to develop in Orissa. Ideological commitment, societal objectives, organizational stability and selfless leadership which are vital for an on-going student movement are, more or less, lacking. Opportunism and lack of commitment of the leaders in the larger political sphere have been reflected, to some extent, in student politics. The objectives and goals of student leaders and organisations have mostly centred around specific grievances of students or local issues rather than broad societal issues. There has not been student movement on the issue of the abolition of casteism; untouchability and communalism comparable to the civil rights movement in the U.S.A. Students have seldom come forward to launch a sustained movement against price rise, black-marketing, political corruption and a host of other socio-economic maladies that afflict our society. They have seldom consciously developed a continuous strategy to articulate their needs and aspirations and mobilise their energies to achieve well defined objectives. Student political organizations have reflected the conflicts and animosities of the larger political sphere. Most of the organizations lack a committed cadre which is willing to fight for its ideology and objectives. One of the serious weakness of student organizations in Orissa is their deprivation of leadership by selfless, dedicated and dynamic persons. The demands of academic life and transitory nature of studentship are impediments to the development of continuous leadership in the student community. Most leaders look upon their organization as a spring board for future political leadership.

CHANGING PATTERN OF STUDENT POLITICAL ELITES

The first thing to be noted in considering the political participa-

tion and activism of the students is that "only a small percentage of the total student body actually participates in them".[11] Even at the apex of any student demonstration or movement, a group numbering a few hundreds at most is actually actively involved while the vast majority of the student population are apathetic and non-committed.

To obtain a clear picture of student government and politics it is important to understand the character, quality and trends of student leadership. A rather consistent finding in India is that "The most active students would come from lower socio-economic strata".[12] In Orissa the vast majority of students come from lower socio-economic strata. Naturally the proportion of student leaders coming from such a background is greater. The main reason for the sudden withdrawl of upper class students from active political involvement since Independence is the contamination of politics by wide-spread corruption and vulgarity. Politics is seldom ranked in the highly prestigious brackets of professions.

Another feature of Orissa student leadership which is congruous with the national scene is that a majority of the leaders are from faculties of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law. Students in the natural sciences and professional courses have been less concerned with indiscipline and political involvement owing to the demanding nature of their curriculum and better job prospect.

Most of the student leaders come from a rural background. This feature also reflects the predominantly rural base of the student population in Orissa. Student leaders with a rural background are invariably inmates of the college hostels. A boarder enjoys an edge over the days-scholar in contesting the election. He enjoys greater freedom from parental control. Most of the student leaders are inmates of hostels and have taken leadership postitons in hostel associations and activities prior to assuming leadership in the students union.

One major trend in student politics in Orissa is that students of academic excellence are seldom attracted to campus politics and leadership has gradually passed into the hands of mediocres. Pressure of curriculum and worries about suitable employment in a "society of scarcity"[13] have kept a large number of academically oriented students aloof from the din and bustle of politics.

Again most of them understandably fight shy of the politics of intimidation and violence sometimes imported into the campus by people with ulterior political motives. This has had a disastrous effect on the quality and character of leadership in the Indian campuses which in its turn has a direct bearing on the culture of the emerging political elites.

Although the vast majority of students in Orissa are politically uninvolved, most of the student leaders are members of student political organizations which are affiliated to political parties. Quite a sizeable number of office-bearers of college unions have become avowedly politically oriented and take these offices as training grounds for careers in politics. Personal interests and pecuniary considerations motivated their activities in a few cases. In some actual instances of serious indiscipline in some campuses there was clear evidence of persons from outside acting as "agent provocateurs". There is a paucity of ideologically committed and dedicated student leaders willing to spearhead an on-going movement in vindication of the 'cause'. The values and nuances of the larger political sphere are sadly being mirrored in the conduct and action of campus-leaders.

The one concomitant of the lack of the ideological commitment of most of the student leaders is that their goals and objectives are not related to larger socio-economic and political problems of the state or the country. The primary concern of the student leaders has been the articulation of the specific grievances of students and putting pressure on the authorities for their redressal.

One important trend in student leadership in Orissa is that majority of them have opted to stay out of politics after completing their education. The lower-middle class and even poor background of the majority of student political elites has compelled them to look upon leadership as a transitory and passing phase of life and the urgency for a job after completing their study as substantial. Pressure of family and chronic financial worries have cut short many a budding and promising career on the road to political leadership. Moreover, the idealistic and conscientious among the student leaders are afraid of the exposure to political wheeling and dealing. Decline of political life has progressively kept at bay many a potential

conscientious political recruits.

One consistent feature of student politics in Orissa is the marginal role played by women students. They are yet to make any impact on student politics despite the activist role played by a couple of women student leaders in the past. By far the most important reason of their non-participation in electoral contests and other protest activities is the conservative social milieu in Orissa. In general, they also lack the guts to brave the hazards and vulgarity of politics.

One interesting phenomenon about student political elites in Orissa is that much of the fire, zeal, activism and idealism displayed by them during their student days fizzles out after they pass into the responsibilities of the adult world. It needs utmost daring and tenacity on the part of a student leader, coming mostly from a poor background, to assume political leadership. In most cases, the fighting spirit and idealistic zeal of the student leaders founders on the rock of stark reality. For how often, non-conformists and protestors of the campus turn out to be men of the establishment, defenders of the stats quo and instruments of powers-that-be. In a society of scarcity, where too many chase too few jobs, it requires tremendous will power and moral conviction to maintain and perpetuate the promises and ideals of one's student days.

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TRIBALS : AN EXPLOITATION-CONFLICT SYNDROME

R. K. Nayak

India is a country which is often said to be an epitome of unity in diversity. Despite the fact that men of stature and statesmanship as also writers and thinkers have always highlighted the unitary characteristics of its culture and tradition, in recent times one can discern with dismay that the situation is changing fast and the various socio-economic as also the demographic diversities have come to the force which need to be tackled both in theory and in terms of practical policy. In this paper, the conflict situations in Orissa with special reference to tribals will be analysed.

The Demographic Situation

According to 1971 census the population of the State is 2.19 crores. The Scheduled Tribes account upto 24% and Scheduled Castes 16% approximately. The Christians number about 1.73% of the population and Muslims another 1.49%. Of the majority community there are again subdivisions in terms of Brahmins who are in minority, Kayasthas who are yet another of the groups while the Khandayats and Farming Class taken together form the largest sub-division. The other Backward Classes who neither belong to the highest groups nor to the lowest in the social ladder constitute a sizeable number though among themselves they are divided into different groups. Thus the demographic structure itself shows innumerable cracks and a spectrum of groups and sub-groups existing within their own different worlds and operating sometime in contradictory situations and at cross purposes. The divisions are based on religion, caste, class and clan concept and are re-inforced by various economic, ethnographic, political as also regional and sectoral forces. Cohesion in such an agglomerated society is no doubt a chimera. It is our endeavour to study the conflict situation with specific reference

to the tribes of Orissa.

The Historical Perspective

There are altogether 62 Tribes in this State; the major Tribes are Khonds, Sauras, Bondas and Santhals. The Socio-cultural structure of each Tribe is unique. With slight variations, the Tribes have a highly egalitarian society, with high status for women, dignity of labour and love of freedom as basic planks of their ethos. They have a completely different world view of their own. Despite centuries of onslaughts of external civilizations and modern influences some of them have been able to maintain their values as seen in their rites and rituals as also traditional institutions. They have a coherent code of conduct. The traditional leadership pattern based on the erstwhile city states of Greek model of direct democracy continues to operate despite the emergence of new political structures including the Panchayat Raj institutions and representative legislatures. The Tribes do not find a place in the elitist and coast-biased history of the State in more than one way. The Khond and Santhal rebellions of the pre-independence era are cases in the point. The frequent defections and withdrawals of support by the Tribal M.L.As, after 1947 are mere manifestations of these revolts and disapproval of the system that is antithetic to their social system and socio-cultural values. This conflict situation is bound to continue unless serious efforts are made to understand appreciate the world from which the Tribal views the outside.

The Economic Domination

The State has been making constant efforts to provide employment and remove poverty as also improve the economic deprivation of the population in general. The plan and other economic documents of the State are replete with schemes and programmes meant for their upliftment. But the analysis of the developmental expenditure shows that the Tribals are the least benefited from the implementation of these programmes and schemes. The analysis of the different levels of development shows that 40% of the Scheduled Tribes and Caste population are included in the

85% of the total population of the State falling below the poverty line. The growth rate of the State's annual income has been hardly 3% on the average over the past two decades. The Tribals, inhabiting the hilly terrains and inaccessible areas of the State operate under rather adverse conditions. Moreover, schemes of general applicability have no relevance for their development. On the other hand, the Tribal areas have been used as colonies of the outside world. In addition, the forest and mineral resources of the environmental and ecological balance of the State.

In other words, there is ample evidence to show that the Tribes are dominated both materially and intellectually by the advanced sections of the society. One need not go on elaborating the physical and psychological pressures exerted on the Tribal communities as well. The planners are also far away from the application of appropriate technology for development of the tribal areas or the tribal skills. These areas are developed along the lines of market economy with outdated doctrines. The forest products collected by the Tribes do not fetch them the amount that can be equated with their daily wages. The system of exchange in the Tribal areas is based on barter, and monetization is almost non-existent. The Tribes still live on the forest fruits and tubers for more than half the year. The labour is highly unorganised and to that extent has no bargaining power. The money lenders have the institutional structure in the area which is exploitative to the core. At least 1/4th of the Tribal population of the State exists in the form of bonded labour either under the money lenders or the contractors. Even the system of food-for-work has acted as a suppressive measure since it does not allow the growth of the human potential.

The welfare programmes so ardently being undertaken by the Government have rendered the Tribal community dole minded, and increasingly dependent on the society and the Government. The evils like child labour and alcoholism do still eat into vitals of the Tribal economy. In short, the Tribal lacks the capital as also the skills to benefit from the modern economic, development. His *Podu* economy is not able to sustain him; rather it has made him the victim of exploitation and harassment by forest and revenue officials. The Tribal sub-plan, though it remains to be objectively evaluated, shows signs of misuse of public money by

bureaucrats to reinforce their own power and strengthen economy. In short, the Tribal lacks a self-reliant economy and an adequate rate of growth and till these are achieved, one cannot but observe a weak individual and an unstable society in a conflict situation.

The Political Scene

With the advent of independence the system of city States gave way to the broader framework of political activity in vogue in the Tribal areas which the Tribes were not prepared for. While the new system of Panchayat Raj has made efforts to substitute the traditional pattern of leadership, the election to the State and National level legislatures suddenly broadened their political role. The Tribe did not quite fit into this new role and rather was a stranger to the entire performance style and structure of Parliamentry democracy. The system thus expected a mature, wide and yet a crafty out-look from a Tribe for whom the political behaviour of a global dimension was a strange world. The Tribal found himself locked up in broader political conflicts as against his limited village or clan situation without adequate training or orientation to handle them. The distribution of power system, processes of politics and the exercise of authority as also functioning of the political parties based on an ideological frame-work and elections strategies made the Tribal lose his self-confidence, and did not offer him much in terms of his own world view.

Although much can be said about the Panchayat Raj institutions and political parties and their hierarchical structures, they had nothing to fit into the world view of the Tribe. Consequently after independence, a new pattern of leadership emerged in the Tribal areas and the traditional socio-political leaders in large measure withdrew from the scene. In this leadership pattern a band of town-bred half-educated elites came forward who were in search of new dilemmas. The opening of all the Tribal areas to modern communications facilitated free exchange of ideas and helped the Tribal elites to play their role effectively. But, the hangover of the traditional value systems was so strong that these elites instead of playing their role as catalysts for change and modernisation responded in a queer manner. Having failed

to internalise the new political system to their advantage, they responded to the system in such a manner that could be termed as tangential and peripheral. These responses were in the shape of defections and withdrawals of the Tribal representative from the established Governments creating instability in the functioning of the Government. The history of the State Ministries of the past three decades in this State would prove these points. Unless a systematic political education is attempted and a real role perspective closer to the Tribal world view is brought home to the Tribes of this State, the situation is likely to bring about further instability in the political future of the State.

The Religious Imbroglio

In the Tribal society the traditional leader has also been the religious leader. He carried charisma with him and promulgates a code of conduct for the Tribals. The code of conduct however, contains a large number of taboos and superstitions which, with slight variations, are common to almost all the Tribes in this State. The Tribal traditions do not permit sudden or mass scale innovation and change in the religious sanctions which are deep rooted in the sum total of the individual's life style-nay-in the social milieu. By and large, the religious belief system was based on animism and zoolatry.

The majority of the State's population are Hindus, believing primarily in pantheism, but observing a variety of rites and rituals as also different tenets based on scriptures. Hinduism because of its absorbing capacity has also engulfed in it some of the different Tribal rituals though keeping the Tribes out of its core fold. The non-too-religious and secular code of conduct of the Tribes has to some extent welcomed Christianity, which is looked with suspicion by the Hindu community. The movements of sankritisation and Hinduisation did not make adequate impact on the Tribal religion and culture. All these created a religious dilemma in the mind of the Tribe, who, however cannot resist the temptations of better avenues of life in towns and cities provided by the modern educational and social system. In any case the different religious movements initiated in the Tribal areas placed the Tribe in an imbroglio, wherefrom he could hardly free himself. Neither

he could assess the role of religion in the social and intellectual evolution, nor could he overcome the alien religious onslaughts on his own traditional value system. As a consequence, he lost his identity, as he had no readymade alternative philosophy to offer to the outside religions which were superior in terms of tactics in Propagation and proselytization. Since religion and politics got mixed up in the Tribal mind, he started identifying himself with the movements for social change which also meant for him a political change. Devoid of a comprehensively recorded and scientific belief system in combination with the age old social inertia he could hardly respond to the alien religions nor could he revitalize his own value system. In other words, the sanctions of the Tribal religion were too weak to defend themselves or provide an alternative. Thus the Tribal society neither could initiate social transformation nor could sustain its elites to manage the social and religious tensions created in the community.

Anthropologists have, however come out with certain analyses where the Tribal religion in general had much to offer in terms of humanism and social panacea. Nevertheless, it is observed that the Tribal elites, who acquired new skills for enhancing their socio-political power, became victims of complex situations and did much harm to the Tribal ethos. Instead of building up a pressure group for the benefit of the Tribes, they have imitated leaderships of the cities and have often become instruments of exploitation of their own kinsmen. These elites, besides being a loss to the community to which they belonged, have also lost the political balance of power though, quite often they have attempted to tamper with it. A process of modernisation with a self-contained doctrine with or without the help of the existing socio-religious elites need be injected to the Tribal way of life, if a revitalised society has to be established and a conflict situation avoided.

Linguistic Divisiveness

None of the Tribal languages have been recognised as official under the Constitution. Nevertheless, of late these languages are being improved and systematised through private and official

efforts. Paradoxically the Oriya has been made the medium of instruction all over the State and 'Oriyaisation' is almost complete. This, to a great extent, has prevented the learning process of the Tribal child and become a hindrance to his development at a faster pace. The slow process of learning also retarded the growth of Tribal awareness of outside world. The problem of education thus remains an enigma for the Tribal folks and very few of them catch up with the alien techniques of learning. With the inherent defects in the system of education being imported all over and coming from an altogether different linguistic world the Tribal has taken quite a long time for his acculturation. The social and educational integration of the Tribal community with the advanced sections of the society, therefore, has been badly delayed.

The linguistic patch works initiated by some Tribes like innovation of a Santhali script in Mayurbhanj are further alienating the Tribe to a great extent from the rest of the society. While the script lacks clarity, legibility and capacity for easy manipulation, its inventors have been trying to foist it on the community and the detractors are determined to crush it. It is, however, to be understood that liquidation of a language does not necessarily liquidate a society. Though the isolationist ideas of the propounders of the new script have not met with any success, nevertheless the situation may lead to social and political tensions. For proper appreciation of the linguistic differences and bringing harmony in the social processes, it would be of relevance to study in depth the different Tribal languages and transform them into fresh vehicles for communicating appropriate ideas. Only such steps will help in the reorganisation of the existing confused state of affairs and rearrangment of the chaotic social order.

The Racial Prejudice

The Tribal folks belong to a distinctly separate race from the rest of the State. They have no ethnic affinity with them and the racial distance is supported by a large number of socio-cultural taboos from both sides. While the Tribals term the non-Tribals as *'dikus'*, the others call the Tribals as *'mlechhas'*. Each seems to be operating in a closed system and with efforts from each for

maintaining perfections of the group, segregation is bound to result. Thus conflict situation seems to be congenital in the system that has prevailed over the ages.

The racial prejudice is based on scriptures and rituals. This also has led to segregated habitants and in certain cases untouchability and unseeability. The racial philosophy to a great extent by now has been neutralised and modified by different social refomers. And, integration and assimilation, which was a far cry some years back now seems to be discernible despite several hazards on the way. These hazards reflect the psychological overtones of a superior-subordinate relationship in a majority-miniority role, the Tribes being minority. In such a situation, despite the shibboleths for racial tolerance and harmony, the distinctive and divisive characteristics remain a force to reckon with. A comprehensive legal structure needs to be created for a rapid integration of society. In the alternative a social consciousness should be generated where a federation of racial groups can function in a peaceful framework, pluralistic society being the fact of life. Since the situation here is different from the colour prejudices prevailing in other countries, it would be easier for us to bring closer the diverse elements and break the artificial barriers created by the religious taboos and the cultural inhibitions. It is hoped that as time passes and with greater 'conscientisation' an understanding and harmonious relationship can be established between the Tribal and the non-Tribal world.

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